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THE NAME,

NATURE, AND FUNCTIONS,

OF

RULING ELDERS;

WHEREIN IT IS SHOWN

FROM THE TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE, THE FATHERS, AND THE REFORMERS,

THAT

RULING ELDERS ARE NOT PRESBYTERS OR BISHOPS;

AND THAT,

AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE, THEIR OFFICE OUGHT TO BE TEMPORARY.

WITH

AN APPENDIX,

ON THE USE OF THE TITLE BISHOP.

BY

THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.,

AUTHOR OF "LECTURES ON THE APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION," "PRESBYTERY AND NOT PRELACY THE SCRIPTURAL AND PRIMITIVE POLITY," ETC.

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WITH PECULIAR EMOTIONS OF HOPE AND JOY,

THE AUTHOR

ASSOCIATES WITH THIS VOLUME THE NAMES

OF

WILLIAM DEARING, HUGH WILSON, WILLIAM YEADON, WILLIAM C. DUKES, D. W. HARRISON, WILLIAM ADGER, AND WILLIAM HARRALL.

THE

Ruling Elders,

WHOSE RECENT ELECTION TO OFFICE

GAVE OCCASION TO ITS PREPARATION.

THE HOPE AND EXPECTATION

OF

THE CHURCH OVER WHICH THEY PRESIDE,

MAY THEIR NAMES, THROUGHOUT ETERNITY,

Be Associated with its Spiritual Advancement,

AND BEING NOW

FOUND WISE TO WIN SOULS TO CHRIST,

MAY THEY THEN

SHINE AS STARS IN THE FIRMAMENT

OF

HEAVEN.

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PREFACE.

In the following work it will appear that while there may be *unity*, there cannot be—or at least there never has been—*uniformity* of opinion. This arises from the weakness and imperfection of our minds; the many influences which shape and modify our view of evidence; and the various "standing points" (as Neander would express it) from which we contemplate the truth. This *variety* in the midst of *unity* is found even in doctrinal sentiment, but much more in matters of ecclesiastical order. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there will be found unity in all that is essential, and "liberty" to differ in all that is not fundamental. And when we wish to know what is essential and what is not essential to salvation, and therefore to the glory of God and the edification of his people, we have perhaps the best and only guide in the words of the apostle, "The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life;" "We are ministers, therefore, not of the letter but of the spirit." Just in proportion, therefore, as any point bears upon the spirituality of the church, and the spiritual well-being of its members, is it essential; while just so far as it is but a means towards this end, and an instrumentality for securing this result, is it unessential, and one therefore about which differences of opinion may be more freely tolerated, and differen-

ces of practice allowed. In reference to all such matters, we should act upon the apostolic canon : " Nevertheless," (that is, notwithstanding " ye be otherwise minded,") " whereto we have attained " to unity of sentiment, " let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing," and be one in our affections towards each other.

Speaking of this subject, the late Dr. Arnold, in his Fragment on the Church, says :—" Comparing these early Christian writers with the Scriptures on the one hand, and with the later Church system on the other, as developed in the forged apostolical constitutions, we shall be able to trace three stages through which Christianity passed, and which indeed exhibit what may be called the law of decay in all institutions, whether administered by men only, or devised by them as well as administered. The first and perfect state exhibits the spirit of the institution not absolutely without all forms, for that is impossible ; but regarding them as things wholly subordinate, indifferent in themselves, and therefore deriving their value from particular times and circumstances ; and as such particular times are not yet come, the spirit of the institution is as yet wholly independent of them ; it uses their ministry, but in no way depends upon their aid. Then comes the second stage, when from particular circumstances the existence of the spirit of the institution depends on the adherence to particular outward regulations. The men of this generation insist, as well they may, on the necessity of these forms, for without them the spirit would be lost. And because others profess to honor the spirit no less than they do, therefore they are obliged to make the forms rather than the spirit their peculiar rallying-word. Around and for these forms is the stress of battle ; but their defenders well know that they are

but the husk in which the seed of life is sheltered; that they are but precious for the sake of the seed which they contain, and to the future growth of which they, under the inclemencies of the actual season, are an indispensable condition.

"Then the storm passes away, and the precious seed, safely sheltered with its husk, has escaped destruction. The forms have done their appointed work, and, like the best of mortal instruments, their end should be, that after having served their own generation by the will of God, they should fall asleep and see corruption. But in the third stage men cannot understand this law. Their fathers clung to certain forms to the death; they said—and said truly—that unless these were preserved, the spirit would perish. The sons repeat their fathers' words, although in their mouths they are become a lie. Their fathers insisted on the forms even more earnestly than on the spirit, because in their day the forms were peculiarly threatened. But now the forms are securely established, and the great enemy who strove to destroy them whilst they protected the seed of life, is now as ready to uphold them, because they may become the means of stifling it. But the sons, unheeding of this change, still insist mainly on the importance of the forms, and seeing these triumphant, they rejoice, and think that the victory is won, just at the moment when a new battle is to be fought, and the forms oppress the seed instead of protecting it. Still they uphold the form, for that is a visible object of worship, and they teach their children to do the same. Age after age the same language is repeated, whilst age after age its falsehood is becoming more flagrant; and still it is said, 'We are treading in the steps of our fathers from the very beginning; even at the very first these forms were held to be essential.' So when the husk cracks, and

would fain fall to pieces by the natural swelling of the seed within, a foolish zeal labors to hold it together: they who would deliver the seed, are taxed with longing to destroy it; they who are smothering it, pretend that they are treading in the good old ways, and that the husk was, is, and ever will be esssential. And this happens because men regard the form and not the substance; because they think that to echo the language of their forefathers is to be the faithful imitators of their spirit; because they are blind to the lessons which all nature teaches them, and would for ever keep the egg-shell unbroken, and the sheath of the leaf unburst, not seeing that the wisdom of winter is the folly of spring."—pp. 119–121.

We may therefore lay it down as a sure criterion of the scripturality and purity of any church, that while it is found contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and for all the essential *principles* of ecclesiastical law, as far as they can be clearly discovered in the heavenly institutes, it is at the same time willing to receive and treat as brethren, those that "are otherwise minded" on matters pertaining to the outward form and order of the church, and the minute arrangements of ecclesiastical order.

Such assuredly has been, and ought to be the character of the Presbyterian church. Such it was under apostolic regimen; in its primitive development; in its continued existence in the Vaudois and Culdee churches; and in its period of glorious reformation. The views of Calvin and other reformers we have presented elsewhere. We cannot, however, resist a quotation from the letter of Œcolampadius, to the pastors of Soleure: "You will consider," he says, "the ceremonies to be used in the Lord's supper, which you are backward to omit and cannot omit without giving great offence.

Some it seems follow the order of Zuric, some of Berne, and some that which we have adopted at Basle. We are here quite in harmony with Zuric and Berne, though we have a different ritual. When we began to reform the churches, we considered what might be most useful to a weak people, without injury to the truth; what the feeble-minded could bear. Our object was that, though in these respects we might differ from Zuric or Strasburg, while we preserved charity towards strangers we might maintain uniformity among ourselves, who were of the same state and under the same government. For the papists and other enemies of the truth, we showed no respect. Thanks be to God, the consequence is entire harmony among the (reformed) clergy of Basle. The same is the case at Zuric and Berne; no inconvenience follows from their little variations from us. Your case is at present different; but nothing can be more advisable than that you should endeavor to agree upon a common formulary among yourselves. Some I know make light of Zuingle, and some of Œcolampadius; we however are, and always have been friends, and no one gratifies us who would sow discord in the house of God under pretence of honoring either of us. The state of your affairs does not admit of a diversity of rites, because other sects are rising up among you: so that, though a variation of ceremonies is of little account among truly spiritual persons, yet among those in whom charity is more defective, if new and singular observances are introduced instead of those which commend themselves to the majority, this must lead to contentions. We have no wish to induce you to adopt our ceremonial, or that of Zuric, or that of Berne; but uniformity among yourselves is very important; and if this be in conformity with your neighbors it will tend the more to exclude ostentation

and silence enemies. Is there any religion in a gold or wooden cup? or in the mystic bread being administered from silver or a glass dish? Has Christ any more regard for those who sit, than for those who stand or kneel? Does he obtain less who receives the sacrament from his own hand, than he who takes it from the hand of another person? O wretched beings that we are, that in calamitous times like these, when the light of the gospel hath so clearly shone upon us, we should be so in bondage to elements, and forget how our liberty is to be used to the edification of our neighbors!"[1]

This spirit, in contrast with that of the Romanists and Prelatists, who like the ancient Pharisees are most severely strict in enforcing uniformity in all the lesser matters, (the tithing of mint and anise and cummin, while they overlook the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith,) has ever been the spirit of Presbyterianism. In further proof of this, we will only mention that as early as the year 1690, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland "authorized the moderator to declare in their names, that they would depose no incumbents simply for their judgment about the government of the church;"[2] and that on this very subject of Ruling Elders, the French Reformed church left all its particular churches to act as they thought best and most accordant to the word of God.

We do not hesitate, therefore, to say that there have been, are, and will be points of order, discipline, and law, about which differences of sentiment cannot but exist; and the attempt to coerce opinion, or to make brethren offenders for a

[1] See in Scott's Contin. of Milner, vol. ii.

[2] Stewart's Collections, B. I. § 30.

word, or to magnify such matters into points of fundamental importance, or on their account to stir up controversy, discord and jealousy, we cannot but regard as equally unchristian and unpresbyterian.

Believing therefore these things, we have not hesitated to give our opinions freely and fully on the question of the Eldership. This we believe to be one of the subjects on which we may attain to *unity*, but not to *uniformity* of views; and the very admission, that while maintaining the office in some essential form, minor differences would be left to the determination of particular presbyteries or churches, would at once hush all sounds of "strife among brethren," and lead us "whereto we have attained to mind the same thing." The spirit that would enforce uniformity, is the very spirit of intolerance and spiritual despotism, and therefore is the rule laid down by Augustine, as necessary to be remembered now as in his day: "In things essential, unity; in things not essential, liberty; and in all things, charity."

For any peculiar opinions, therefore, presented in this work, not at present general in our church, we offer in conclusion, the apology given by the learned Vitringa, for similar views: "Non culpo itaque nos Presbyteros Laicos; quin agnosco eos et probo ut qui maxime. Ne peccem tamen in leges Fraternitatis cujus partem facio si rotunde enunciem, ejusmodi me Presbyteros nullos reperire in Ecclesia apostolica primi temporis, nullos etiam in Ecclesia temporum sequentium, nullos in Scriptis apostolorum aut monumentis sequentium ætatum quantum illa seu a me seu ab aliis perlustrata sunt. Haec opinio sane mihi ita diu sedit ut in ea procedente tempore plenissime sim confirmatus et ut vitio mihi non reputem quod eam liberrime evulgem, etsi non æque consonam

communi Ecclesiarum nostrarum sententiæ. Cum enim hæc quæstio inter articulos fidei nostræ levissimi sit momenti, quam proinde cuique liberum est modeste et reverenter ventilare et veritas mihi at altera parte admodum aperte blandiatur, nullus æqui et veri studiosus mihi invidebit, opinor libertatem defendendi sententiam, quam nulla alia ratio aut præsumptio præter vim veritatis me coegit amplecti.[1]

[1] De Vet. Synag. p. 484.

THE NAME,

NATURE, AND FUNCTIONS

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RULING ELDERS.

THE NAME, NATURE, AND FUNCTIONS

OF

RULING ELDERS.

CHAPTER I.

The nature, end, and object of the Church of Christ, its officers and ordinances, with a general review of the origin, title, and history of the office of Ruling Elder.[1]

We will introduce the subject by quoting the words of the Apostle in his epistle to the Ephesians 4: 8–16: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: but speaking the truth in love, may grow up unto him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the

[1] N. B.—This chapter formed the substance of two Discourses with Addresses to the Elders and the People, on the occasion alluded to in the Dedication.

measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

In this passage of holy Scripture, we have a delineation of the polity and design of the church. The object of Christ's ascension was twofold. In the first place, it was the consummation and the triumph of his incarnate mystery. He had come down from heaven, and dwelt in this earth of ours : yea, and submitted, for a time, to lie in its caverns, under the power of death, that by this humiliation, abasement, and suffering in the room of sinners, he might purchase eternal redemption for those who had been hopelessly enslaved by sin, Satan, the world, and death. These enemies Christ had vanquished on the cross, and put them to an open shame : and now, as a triumphant conqueror, he returned to his Father, ascending beyond the regions of the air into the highest heavens—" going up," as the Psalmist elsewhere expresses it, " with a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet"—leading in his train, and dragging, as it were, at his chariot wheels, those conquerors and oppressors who had enslaved his people ; entering the heavenly gates with the acclamations of all the celestial hierarchy ; and sitting on a throne of glory that he might fill all things with his influence, and direct and overrule all things by his wisdom and power. And as conquerors were accustomed to give largesses to their soldiers, so did the ascended Saviour pour down his royal donatives upon his faithful subjects—yea, gifts in which they even who had been long rebellious, were also to share.

Having, therefore, laid the foundation of his church, in his complete and finished work of righteousness, and endowed it with its charter in his final commision, Christ now shed down a rich variety of gifts and graces from his triumphal seat at the right hand of the Father, to qualify and endow his servants for those various offices which he has wisely and graciously instituted for the advancement of his kingdom and glory upon the earth. For this purpose, he appointed extraordinary officers, endowed with the gifts of tongues, of miracles, and of inspiration, to organize, construct, and legislate for his infant church. The office of such supernaturally qualified men was personal, and terminated with its first incumbents, whose writings and example per-

petuate and extend their *influence* and *authority* to the remotest generations. But besides those who were thus extraordinary and adapted to the emergency of a new and rising commonwealth, Christ also provided for the settled and continued order and polity of his churches, by instituting the office of pastors and teachers, who are more technically called bishops or presbyters, whose duty it should be to preside in the several congregations of his people; to take the oversight of them in the Lord; and to instruct them out of his word, teaching them to observe all things whatever he had commanded, either while personally on earth or by the mouth of these inspired apostles and prophets. To these officers, and to the body of his people, Christ gave the power, and assigned the duty of carrying out the purposes of his redeeming love; gathering congregations, celebrating his ordinances, obeying all his laws, and perpetuating his church to the end of the world. And as, in accordance with the great fundamental principle of representation, which lies at the foundation of all society, natural, social, and moral, it was found that the interests of the church would be promoted by a delegation of power to a few who should act for, and in the name of the body, and be responsible to them, we find that very early in the history of the apostolic churches, officers were appointed and representatives chosen to carry out the wishes of the brethren, and to consult, deliberate, rule and act, in their name. Of this class were the Deacons, to whom properly belongs the oversight and control of the temporal affairs of the church, and the appropriation of its funds to the relief of the poor; not, however, in independence of the other officers, but in connexion with them. For, as all the higher officers include the lower, so "the deacons' court" included the minister and elders, before whom every point requiring consultation was to be brought, the carrying out of all such financial arrangements *alone* constituting the peculiar work and duty of the Deacons.[1] Besides the deacons it would appear that other

[1] The following is the arrangement adopted by the Free Church of Scotland:

The duties of Elders, as laid down by the General Assembly.

Respecting the peculiar duties of elders:—

BRETHREN were chosen to represent the people in all the councils of the church, and to form with the bishop or presbyter a standing court, in connexion with each congregation charged

1. That they sit in session along with the minister, and assist in the administration of discipline, and in the spiritual government of the church.

2. That they take a careful oversight of the people's morals and religious principles, of the attendance upon public ordinances, and of the state of personal and family religion.

3. That they visit the sick from time to time in their several districts.

4. That they superintend the religious instruction of the young, and assist the minister in ascertaining the qualifications of applicants for admission to sealing ordinances.

5. That they superintend and promote the formation of meetings within their districts, for prayer, reading the Scriptures, and Christian fellowship, among the members of the church.

The duties of Deacons.

Respecting the peculiar duties of deacons:—

1. That they give special regard to the whole secular affairs of the congregation.

2. That they attend to the gathering of the people's contributions to the general fund for the sustentation of the ministry; and that they receive the donations which may be made for other ecclesiastical purposes.

3. That they attend to the congregational poor.

4. That they watch over the education of the children of the poor.

Elders and Deacons.

Respecting the duties which are common to elders and deacons:—

1. That both elders and deacons may receive the Sabbath collections of the people, according to such arrangements as shall be made by the deacons' court.

2. That, for the better discharge of their peculiar duties respectively, as well as with a view to increased opportunities of doing good, both elders and deacons visit periodically the districts assigned to them, and cultivate an acquaintance with the members of the church residing therein.

3. That it is competent for elders to be employed as deacons, when a sufficient number of deacons cannot be had.

4. That deacons may assist the elders with their advice, whether in session or otherwise, when requested so to do.

The Deacons' Court.

Respecting the meeting of minister, elders and deacons, for secular affairs; which meeting may be called the Deacons' Court:—

1. That the minister preside in said meeting, when he is present; and, in his absence, any elder or deacon whom the meeting may fix upon.

with maintaining the spiritual government of the church: for which purpose, according to our standards, they had power to inquire into the knowledge and Christian conduct of the mem-

2. That the said meeting, or deacons' court, is convened by citation from the pulpit, or by personal notice to the members thereof, and is called by authority of the minister, or at the requisition of any three members,—said requisition being addressed to the minister, or, in time of a vacancy of the pastoral charge, to the clerk of the said court; and the proceedings are opened and closed with prayer.

3. That this court has the management and charge of the whole property belonging to the congregation, including church, session-house, manse, school-buildings, &c., and of all its secular affairs,—including, of course, the appropriation of seats, with the determination of all questions relating thereto. And it is the province and duty of said court to transmit, from time to time, to the treasurer appointed by the General Assembly, or their committee, the funds raised for the general sustentation of the ministry; also, to apply the remaining congregational funds, in fitting proportions, to the support of the ministry, the payment of the salaries of the various subordinate functionaries, and the defraying of all necessary charges connected with the property, or with the dispensation of Christian ordinances; to apply, moreover, any surplus which may thereafter arise, to religious, ecclesiastical, educational, or benevolent objects; likewise to make special collections at the church-door, as often as may appear to them to be necessary, for the temporal relief of poor members of the congregation, and for the education of the children of the poor; and, finally, to receive the deacons' reports of their proceedings, to give them such advice and instruction as may be required, and to decide as to the payments made by them for the relief of the poor and the education of youth.

4. That while the church is solely at the disposition of the minister for all religious purposes, the consent of the deacons' court, as well as of the minister, is necessary, before any meeting, not strictly of a religious, ecclesiastical, or charitable nature, can be held in it.

5. That the said court shall have one or more treasurers and a clerk, and a separate record for the minutes of its proceedings.

6. That the record of the court, with the treasurer's account of receipt and expenditure, after said account shall have been duly audited by appointment of the court, shall be annually exhibited to the presbytery of the bounds, at the first ordinary meeting thereof after the 15th of March, for the purpose of being examined and attested by the presbytery at said meeting.

7. That on the first Monday after said attestation of the record and treasurer's account, or on some convenient day of the first or second week following the attestation by the presbytery, a congregational meeting shall be held, when the deacons' court shall present a report of its proceedings for the preceding year, give such information and explanations as may be asked for, and receive any suggestions which may be offered by the members of the congregation for

bers of the church; to call before them offenders and witnesses, being members of their own congregation, and to introduce other witnesses, where it may be necessary to bring the process to issue, and when they can be procured to attend: to admonish, to rebuke, to suspend, or exclude from the sacraments those who are found to deserve censure; to concert the best measures for promoting the spiritual interests of the congregation; and to appoint delegates to the higher judicatories of the church.

Dr. Hinds, who is chaplain to the archbishop of Dublin, in his History of the Rise and Progress of Christianity, says—"When, therefore, we read that a decree was made by the apostles, presbyters, and the whole church, one of two things must be supposed to have taken place: either the presbyters took each the sense of his own congregation, or the presbyters and other *official persons*, it may be, met as the representatives, each of his own congregation, and all of the church collectively. The former supposition is certainly encumbered with more and greater difficulties than the latter. The subject proposed at these Christian meetings, seems, from the tenor of the narrative throughout, to have been first presented to the church in any shape; and the decisions took place before the meeting was dissolved. There are no marks of any previous notice of the matter to be discussed, so as to enable the several presbyters to consult the opinions and wishes of their constituents; and the decision took place without any interval to allow of an after consultation. Against the remaining supposition, namely, that the presbyters and *other official persons*, perhaps, met as the plenipotentiaries, each of his own body, the strongest obstacle lies in the phrase, 'It seemed good to the presbyters with the whole church.' Now this expression, after all, may imply no more than that it seemed good to the presbyters, and whatever other members of the council in conjunction with them, may be called the whole church, beca use appointed to represent it."[1]

the consideration of the court, with reference to the future distribution of the funds. The congregational meeting shall be convened by intimation from the pulpit, and the minister, if present, shall preside in it.

8. That to the said court shall belong the appointment and dismissal of the church-officer and door-keepers.—See note A.

[1] Volume 1, page 349, and see pages 347, 348. See also similar opinions in

But while we believe that such officers are to be found in "the brethren" who sat in the council at Jerusalem, in "the helps and governments" elsewhere alluded to; and in "the church" before which offences were to be brought[1]; we are strong in the belief that they are never once spoken of under the term presbyter or elder, *which always refers to the teacher or bishop solely;* and that the primitive churches were left at liberty to carry on the business of the church, either with or without such representatives, just as might be found most expedient, and most promotive of their peace, purity and harmony. For in no other way can we account for the fact that nowhere in the New Testament are these representatives enumerated as a distinct class of officers, as are the deacons and the bishops: that nowhere do we find distinct qualifications laid down for such officers, as we do for the bishop or presbyter, and for the deacons and deaconesses;[2] and the fact also that it is beyond controversy that down to a late period, some, at least, of the largest churches continued to carry on the business of the congregation in their general and

reference to the delegated character of *"the brethren"* in this Council, by Bishop Jewell, Def. of Apol. Part 1, p. 41: by Whitaker De Concil, Quæst. 3, cap. 3; in Jameson's Cyprianus Isotimus, pp.542, 543. See also Bucer De Gubern, Eccl. p. 84, in ibid. p. 555. Barnard's Synagogue and the Church, p. 258.

Blondel judges, that 'tis most probable, that, in the time of the Apostles, not the whole multitude, but only their seniors used to convene for choosing of their Deacons, or such affairs. (De Jure Plebis, Francfort, 1690, p. 262, quoted in the original in Jameson's Cypr. Isot. p. 542.)

"I can't, indeed," says Professor Jameson, "during the first three centuries, find express mention of these seniors or ruling elders; for I freely pass from some words of Tertullian and Origen which I elsewhere overly mentioned as containing them; as also from what I said of the Ignatian Presbyters, their being Ruling or non-preaching Elders, and that without giving of much advantage to the Diocesanists, since in and about the Cyprian age, in which time, as I judge, the author or interpolator wrote, there were belonging to the same church, parish, or congregation, divers Presbyters, who preached little, if any; and yet had power to dispense the word and sacraments." (Do. p. 544.) See further proofs in Clarkson's Primitive Episcopacy, pp. 92, 100, 104, 105. Burn's Eccl. Law on Church Wardens and Visitation. Many eminent Presbyterian writers are of opinion that Ruling Elders are not of divine right, but as they act for and represent the people. (See Biblical Repertory, 1832, p. 28.)

[1] Matt. 18. 15–18.

[2] See the Biblical Repertory, April, 1843, page 327.

democratic form.[1] Experience, however, proved, as it still proves in Congregational churches, the inexpediency and danger

[1] As to the actual practice of the primitive churches, the following, out of innumerable proofs, may suffice. In the times succeeding the Apostolic, the people were always consulted in the selection of ministers. First, with respect to Bishops; Cyprian, in his letter to Antonianus, writes thus in reference to the election of Cornelius, Bishop of Rome: "For that which commends our most beloved Cornelius to God, and to Christ, and to his Church, and to all his brethren, in the Priesthood, is, that he did not come to his Bishopric suddenly, but he passed through all the different orders of the Church, and he was made Bishop by very many of our Colleges who were then at Rome, who sent to us, in reference to his ordination, the highest testimonials in his praise. He was made their Bishop by the will of God and of his Christ, by the testimony of almost all the Clergy, by the suffrages of the people who were then present." We learn from this passage that Cornelius was elected to his Bishopric by the Bishops, but that his election was confirmed by the suffrages of the people. In another Epistle he says: The ordination of Priests ought not to take place, but with the approval of the people: that by their presence either the crimes of bad men may be detected, or the merits of good men proclaimed; and let that be a just and legitimate ordination, which shall have been determined on by the suffrages and judgment of all. Eusebius gives similar testimony; speaking of the election of Fabian, Bishop of Rome, he says, "That all the people who had assembled at the election cried out that he was worthy." In a letter from a Council held at Nice, to the Church at Alexandria, it is enjoined, "That no one be chosen into the room of any Bishop deceased, unless he appear worthy, and the people elect him; the bishop of the city of Alexandria giving his approval and confirming the judgment of the people."

With respect to the appointment of Presbyters, &c., though the consent of the people was not absolutely necessary, yet no Bishop of good repute would appoint one, contrary to the expressed wish of the people. "In ordaining Clergymen, beloved brethren, we are accustomed first to consult you, and to consider with you the merits and deserts of each." See quoted in Vitringa De Vet. Synag. lib. ii. cap. vi. of Bernard's Synag. pp. 170–172. See the most ample proofs on this subject in "Coleman's Primitive Church" recently printed in this country. See chapter IV. on the elections by the Church, in which he shows that suffrage was enjoyed by the primitive churches, and when this was withdrawn, p. 54, &c. In chapter V. he shows how far discipline was exercised by the people. The epistles of all the apostolical fathers are addressed to the churches at large, and imply that the members or their delegates had the power of judging in all cases. See page 96, &c. See also evidence from Tertullian and others; page 99, 104, &c. This view is confirmed by the ablest historians, Valencis, Du Pin, Simonis, Mosheim, Guerike, Neander, &c. "Thus is it proved," says Mr Coleman, "that the church continued for two or three centuries, to regulate her own discipline by the will of the majority, expressed

of such a course, its impotency and inefficiency on the one hand, and on the other hand its tendency to produce parties, schisms and disturbances, and even tumults and open ruptures in the church.[1] We find, therefore, in after times, a general, if not universal adoption of the principle of representation, and the government of the churches through officers chosen from time to time by the members of the church, and variously called seniors of the people, sidesmen or assistants, wardens, eldermen, and elders, ancients and rectors, the name betokening not the age of these officers, but their character, gravity, and established reputation, as wise and pious men. In the progress of that great apostacy, which for ultimate purposes of good has been permitted to come upon the church, prelates were introduced in conformity with the high priests of the hierarchy of pagan Rome;[2] the simple order of bishops or presbyters was multiplied into the numerous and paganized orders now found in the Greek and Roman churches; the name and rights of God's "clergy," that is, his chosen people, (see 1 Peter 2: 9,) and of his true ministers, were monopolized by these prelatical despots, who constituted themselves into a hierarchy, and excluded *the laity* and the *inferior clergy*, as the Lord's freemen and ambassadors were ignominiously called, from all right, title, and authority, whatsoever, in that heavenly commonwealth of which Christ had constituted them citizens, yea even priests and kings unto God.[3]

The Reformation, by the great grace and mercy of Him

either by popular vote, OR BY A REPRESENTATIVE DELEGATION CHOSEN BY THEM." p. 95. The Synods also or Councils at first clearly considered themselves as *representative* bodies, delegated by the whole church. "Ipsa representatis totius nominis Christiani," says Tertullian, De Jejun, c. 13, p. 552. See Mosheim De Rebus Christ. Sect. II. § 23, and Coleman, p. 115. See also Note B, end.

[1] See note C.

[2] See plain and palpable proof of this given in a work on "The Conformity between Modern and Ancient Ceremonies, wherein is proved, by incontestible authorities, that the ceremonies of the Church of Rome are entirely derived from the heathen, by Pierre Mussard, Pastor of the French or Huguenot Church at Lyons. London, 1745, chap. ii. and iii." This part of the parallel is, for very obvious reasons, omitted in the recently reprinted work by Stopford, "Pagano Papismus," which is, like Middleton's Letter from Rome, a substantial reprint of this volume.

[3] See the author's work on Presbytery and Prelacy, chap. xiv. p. 295, &c.

whose glorious work it was, restored to the Christian people their birth-right, and to the bishops or presbyters,—the true and only ministers of Christ,—their standing in the regenerated church; and again committed to their hands the oracles of God, the doctrines of grace, the administration of discipline, and the general oversight of the church. And we find that just as there was then a heaven-guided unanimity in their confession of all the leading doctrines the gospel, by *all* the Reformed churches, —so was there also the same marvellous and supernatural concurrence in the belief that there is but one order of ministers in Christ's church, and that it of right belongs to Christ's people, —and not to any despotic or Erastian hierarchy—to govern and direct her affairs in conformity to the order, polity, and laws laid down in Christ's written and infallible word.[1] Wherever, therefore, the civil power did not interfere, *as it did in England*, to coerce and restrain the free action of God's disenthralled people, we find that they settled down into that form of polity which is still perpetuated in non-Episcopal churches. Besides bishops or presbyters, who came to be called ministers and pastors, in order to distinguish them from those who had prostituted the scriptural title of bishop to the designation of the *man-made* order of prelates, and who had associated this name with every

[1] That such was very strongly the opinion of the Reformed churches, will appear from the following quotation from the Smalcald Articles:—"Ubi est igitur vera Ecclesia, ibi necesse est esse jus eligendi et ordinandi Ministros; sicut in casu necessitatis absolvit etiam Laicus, et fit Minister ac Pastor, alterius: sicut narrat Augustinus historiam de duobus Christianis in navi, quorum alter baptizaverit κατηχουμενον et is baptizatus deinde absolverit alterum. Huc pertinent sententiæ Christi, quæ testantur, claves Ecclesiæ datas esse, non tantum certis personis. (Matt. 18: 20.) Ubicunque erunt duo vel tres congregati in nomine meo, etc.

"Postremo etiam hoc confirmat sententia Petri: (1 Peter 2: 9.) Vos estis regale Sacerdotium. Quæ verba ad veram Ecclesiam pertinent, quæ cum sola habeat Sacerdotium, certe habeat jus eligendi et ordinandi Ministros. Idque etiam communissima Ecclesiæ consuetudo testatur. Nam olim populus eligebat Pastores et Episcopos. Deinde accedebat Episcopus, seu ejus Ecclesiæ, seu vicinus, qui confirmabat electum impositione manuum, nec aliud fuit ordinatio nisi talis comprobatio." (Hase's Libri Symbolici. Leipsic, 1837, vol. 1, p. 253.)

See also many authorities given in the author's work on Presbytery and not Prelacy, ch. iii. § 3, p. 74, &c., where the subject is fully treated.

thing cruel, tyrannical and unholy,[1] they universally agreed that it was in accordance with Scripture, to appoint in every congregation some representatives of the people, who should be associated with the ministers in all acts of religion and government; that is, in all those acts, and only those, in which the people had an inherent right to consult, vote, deliberate and act, in conformity with the original commission and charter of the church. And as Christ had instituted an order of men for the express purpose of teaching, administering the sacraments, and ordaining those whom the church should approve, to the same high and holy ministry, and had, therefore, excluded the people from any ordinary intrusion into those offices, they also who represented the people, and were clothed with the delegated rights possessed by the people, were necessarily limited to a co-operation with the bishops of the churches in those things that pertained to *order, government and discipline.*[2]

Such assuredly were the views entertained by the Reformers. While they all agreed as to the expediency and propriety of such officers, there was great variety in the names by which ruling elders were called. In the Belgic confession they are termed "seniors,"[3] by which word they were distinguished in the enumeration of the fathers from the presbyters. In the ecclesiastical laws of the church of Geneva, they are called "inspectors," and "seniors," and "commissioners for the seniory" or consistory.[4]

"The Waldenses," says Bucer, "besides ministers of the word and sacraments, have a certain college of men, excelling in prudence and gravity of spirit, whose office it is to correct and admonish offending brethren."[5] These are called "rulers, ancients and elders." The Syrian churches, which have existed

[1] See Counsellor Prynne's Antipathie of the English Lordly Prelacy, Both to Regal Monarchy and to Civil Unity, or an Hist. Collection of the Several execrable Treasons, Conspiracies, Rebellions, Seditions, Oppressions, &c., of our English, British, French and Irish Lordly Prelates, &c. London, 2 vols, 4to. 1641.

See Form of Government, ch. i, § 2.

[3] Art. 31. See in Niemeyer's Collectio Conf. in Eccl. Ref. p. 382.

[4] See this fully proved hereafter.

[5] Quoted by Sir S. Moreland, page 60, in Plea for Presbytery, page 347.

[6] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 507, and Plea for Presbytery, p. 347, &c.

from the earliest period, called them "representatives of the people."[1] The Bohemian churches called them "seniores ecclesiæ"[2] or "the assistants," as Comenius terms them.

In the Book of Common Order of the English church at Geneva, of which John Knox was minister, which was approved by Calvin, and received and used by the Reformed church of Scotland, and formerly prefixed to the psalms in metre, they are called "elders," the words being evidently a translation of the term "seniores," and not of the Greek term *presbyters*, and certainly not of that passage in the epistle to Timothy, from which they have now come to be generally denominated "ruling elders."[3] In the first Book of Discipline of the Church of Scotland, drawn up by John Knox and others in 1560, the terms "elders" and "seniors" are both employed.[4] In the order for the election of elders, found in Knox's manuscript history, and published in 1569, they are are called "eldaris and helparis."[5] In the Second Book of Discipline of the Church of Scotland, agreed upon in 1578, ministers are called "pastors, Episcopi or bishops, or ministers,"[6]—and it is shown to be their peculiar function to teach, to administer the sacraments, to bless the people, to pronounce all sentences of binding or loosing "after lawful proceeding be the eldership,"[7] for it adds, "he is a messenger and herauld betwixt God and the people, (including of course in this term, people, the elders themselves, who merely represent the people in all these affairs)." This declaration of the functions of a minister must certainly include "laying on of hands," since this must be regarded as belonging to "the power of the keyes grantid unto the Kirk,"[8] and of which the minister is declared to be the messenger and herald. In this work elders are called

[1] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 421.

[2] See do. p. 520, and Plea, &c., p. 356.

[3] See Dunlop's Confession of Faith, vol. 2, p. 408. 1 Tim. 5: 17, is never quoted in proof.

[4] Do. do. pp. 577, 578, § 5, p. 580, § 8.

[5] Do. do. page 637.

[6] Dunlop's Confession of Faith, vol. 2, p. 770.

[7] An old manuscript has, "It appertains to the Minister be lawful preconcluding with the Eldership." Do. do. pp. 771, 772.

[8] Do. do.

" seniors or elders,"[1] " sic as we commonly call elders."[2] " In this our division," it is added, " we call these elders whom the Apostles called presidents or governors," and the propriety of having a Church Session, or " particular eldership," this Book founds upon the fact that " this we gather of the practice of the primitive Kirk, where elders or colleges of *seniors* were constitute in cities and famous places." " It appertains to elders," according to this Book, among other things, " to assist the pastor in the examination of them that comes to Lord's table," but in no way is it implied that they should interfere with the peculiar function of the ministry, to wit, the public consummation of all such proceedings by imposition of hands, pronouncing of sentence, introduction into the church by public covenant, &c. For while it is undoubtedly true that such particular elderships[3] are empowered by this Book to " excommunicate the obstinate," and " to take heed that the word of God be purely preached within their bounds, the sacraments rightly administered, and even " deposition" to be pronounced, &c., no one will pretend that the ruling elders were to preach, administer sacraments, or pronounce sentence of excommunication. And therefore, when the provincial assembly have the power given them by this book to examine and ordain ministers, it cannot be pretended that the final and public ministerial act of " imposition of hands" is to be performed by elders, merely because it appertains to them to assist the ministers in all the preparatory examinations and decisions necessary to such final ordination.

In the Directory " Concerning Church Government," drawn up by the Westminster Assembly, and adopted by the Church of Scotland, and still in force, as " The form of Presbyterial Church Government," used by it and published with the Confession of Faith—in this work, ruling elders are never so called, nor is their office ever founded on the passage where these words occur (i. e. 1 Tim : 5, 17. They are usually entitled throughout this work,

[1] Dunlop's Confession of Faith, vol. 2, p. 774. " *Sometimes*," it is said the word in Scripture is taken largely, compehending as well the pastors and doctors.

[2] Do. page 776.

[3] See do. do. pp. 779, 780.

"other church governors."[1] These "officers," it is said, "Reformed churches *commonly* called elders."[2] The early English Puritans held that "by God's ordinance every congregation should make choice of other officers as assistants unto the minister in the spiritual regiment of the congregation."[3] Thus Cartwright in A. D. 1590 calls them "those that have charge of government only."[4] And, not to enlarge, our own standards, while they adopt the common title of "ruling elders" yet fully and advisedly define and characterize these officers as being "properly the representatives of the people, chosen by them for the purpose of exercising government and discipline in conjunction with pastors or ministers. This office," it is added, "has been understood by a great part of the Protestant Reformed churches to be designated in the Holy Scriptures by the title of governments, and of those who rule well but do not labor in word and doctrine."

In the Genevan church, in the English church there, and in all the continental churches, the office was temporary, the incumbents being elected yearly or every second year. Such also was the doctrine laid down in the first Book of Discipline, and the practice it enjoins. By the second Book of Discipline the office was made permanent, but it was arranged that a sufficient number might be appointed to allow a certain quota to officiate alternately. In the French Protestant churches, the office *was and is* temporary. In the Reformed Dutch church, Elders are elected every two years.[5]

As to ordination, the earliest and fullest account is that given by the Confession of the Bohemian church, adopted in 1632. "They who are chosen by a plurality of votes after evening sermon is ended, are called forth by the visitor and the duties of their office are read to them. And they by word, and with the

[1] I use a copy printed in 1688. See pp. 422, 425.

[2] Page 426, Romans 12: 7, 8, and 1 Cor. 12: 28, are given as proof texts, but not 1 Tim. 5: 17, which is *never once* quoted in all the varied references to the subject, pp. 427, 429, 431, 434, &c.

[3] See quoted by Dr. Ames in Plea for Presbytery, page 360.

[4] Confut. of the Remist's Transl. 1618, p. 573.

[5] Lorimer on the Eldership, p. 165.

lifted hand, promise faithfulness and diligence. And that in the church also they may discharge the duty of watchmen, they are honored with a peculiar seat, that they may the more conveniently see the people."[1] It thus appears from this model, which doubtless embraced the views of the Reformed churches, that no imposition of hands was employed in the ordination of Elders. That such was the case in the Church of Geneva is certain. And that no such form has ever been introduced into the Presbyterian churches of Scotland and Ireland is also certain. Neither is any such form prescribed or implied in our own standards, or used by any other branch of the Presbyterian chrch, sofar as is known to us.

The duties of Elders in the Church of Scotland, are thus laid down in Steuart's Collections, a work which was of standard authority in this country until the aboption of our own form of government, and which constituted the basis on which that form was constructed.[2] "The duties of the Elders which are more public are those which lie upon them in the assemblies of the church in which ruling Elders have right to reason and vote in all matters coming before them, even as ministers have; for in General Assemblies their commissions bear them to the same power with pastors. Howbeit by the practice of our church, the execution of some decrees of the church doth belong to the pastors only, such as the imposition of hands, the pronouncing of the sentences of excommunication and absolution, the receiving of penitents, the intimation of sentences and censures about ministers and such like. In short, the Elder is to speak nothing to the church from the pulpit."

It might have been thought therefore impossible, but for facts to the contrary, for any question ever to have arisen as to the right or duty of ruling elders to join in imposing hands at the ordination of ministers. For surely if there is one act peculiar to ministers as "the messengers and heralds between God and the people" it is this, and how can it with any propriety be the function of an officer who has never himself been similarly inducted into office.

[1] See page 51 as quoted in Plea for Presbytery, p. 356.

[2] See Compendium of the Laws of the Church of Scotland, vol. 1, pp. 223, 224.

Certain it is that in the Directory of the Westminster Assembly, which is the standard of all the Scotch, Irish, and most of the American Presbyterian Churches, it is again and again declared as if by a frequent and intentional repetition, that "preaching presbyters orderly associated are those to whom the imposition of hands doth appertain for those congregations within their bounds respectively."[1] And it is even required in the great emergency in which the church then stood, that "it is requisite that ministers be ordained by some who, being set apart themselves for the work of the ministry, have power to join in setting apart others."[2]

It is, therefore to be hoped, that a question so clearly settled by the universal practice of our own church, and of every sister church, will be put to rest, and that elders especially will not be found agitating the church by such vain and foolish questions, which gender strifes, and while they do no good, stand in the way of much that might be accomplished.

Such then are the officers which the ascended Saviour instituted in his church. Now the great end aimed at in the organization, polity, ordinances and offices of the church, was its complete organization, and therefore its efficiency. Thus speaks the apostle in the above passage, where he says that the object of all this varied ministry was to prepare believers for the perfect enjoyment of all Christian privileges, and the successful discharge of all Christian obligations to the impenitent around them and to the world at large.[3] The church itself, and all its officers and the whole machinery of its spiritual organization, are not to be regarded, as in themselves considered, of value or importance, any more than the rites and ceremonies, the types and shadows of the ancient economy. Like them, they are means for the accomplishment of an ultimate end, and will, when that end is attained, pass away and be forgotten. These constitute but the building for the accommodation of the redeemed, while in this land of their pilgrimage; and like the rude frame-work of the tabernacle, will give place to that temple not made with hands,

[1] See Lorimer on the Eldership, pp. 438, 443. [2] See page 449.

[3] See the remarks on this passage in the author's work on Presbytery and Prelacy, pp. 33, 83, 85, 107, 138.

eternal in the heavens. To allow, then, our devotion to terminate on the outward form, order, ministry, or ordinances of any church; or our confidence to be placed upon our connexion with them, is nothing short of *idolatry*, and can be no more acceptable to God, who is a Spirit, and must be worshiped in spirit and in truth, than the worship of the golden calves of Aaron and of Jeroboam. The apostle therefore directs our attention to the great and ultimate end for which Christ became the foundation and the chief corner stone of Zion, and for which he has instituted all its laws, polity, and ordinances. These are all designed to increase the number and perfect the hearts of them that should hereafter believe on his name, that they should no longer be left like children, helpless and exposed; or like the waves of the sea be tossed to and fro by every new doctrine and opinion; or like clouds be borne hither and thither by every gust of sophistical delusion which cunning and eloquent men may advance; but may rather be enabled by a steadfast and affectionate adherence to the truths of the gospel, and the simple ordinances of Christ, to grow up to the maturity of perfect men, and to the full measure of that spiritual maturity which is the fullness of Christ, the great centre of union, and the only source of life and joy; and may thus attain to that holiness which will fit them to become residents in his mansion in the skies, and meet partakers of an inheritance among the saints in light. Such is the true and ultimate end aimed at in the constitution of the church and its ministrations, and just so far as it is found effectual in accomplishing this glorious result is it to be regarded as fulfilling its high destiny. In this aspect the true character and importance of these offices and ordinances become apparent; and their wise and merciful adaptation to the capacities and wants of weak, erring, and mutable creatures, and to the social sympathies of our nature, clear and manifest. The church is our home, its ministers our kind instructors, its officers our guardians and friends, its members our brethren and sisters, and its ordinances and public assemblies those spiritual meals where we are gathered around the sacred and family board, and partake together of the provisions of everlasting life and joy. And just as the family homestead, the instructions there given, and the sympathies

there awakened, irradiate life's otherwise cheerless pathway with the continual sunshine of happiness and peace, and fit us for the proper discharge of life's duties, and a patient endurance of its trials; so do all the influences which encompass us round about in the dwelling-place of the children of God, give us in this life peace and contentment, and many an hour of rapturous exultation, and prepare us for the blessedness and the activities of a better world.

By the ministrations of the church and the faithful proclamation of the gospel, men are led to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus become united to Him as their legal, vital, and ever-living head. And by a union with the church, men are also brought into the relation of spiritual unity and brotherhood with those who are members of Christ's body, and become with them branches of the same vine, sheep of the same fold, soldiers in the same host, members of the same body, children of the same household, indwellers in the same ark of deliverance, heirs to the same inheritance, and laborers in the same vineyard. Now the ministrations of the church promote this double union to Christ the common Head, and to fellow-Christians; and thus enable it by the unity of its spirit, the harmony of its plans, the affectionateness of its members one for another, by its public attestation to the truth, by its holy light, influence and example, and by its active, zealous and liberal devotion to the cause of Christ, to make the Gospel sound forth into all the region round about, and to the very remotest bounds of the earth. For this purpose does Christ, the good shepherd, still continue to send forth ministers as under shepherds, that they may gently lead his flock along the green pastures, and beside the still waters; gather the lambs into his arms of mercy; and feed them with milk and food convenient for them, until they grow to maturity in knowledge and in grace. For this purpose are elders also given, that they may co-operate with the under shepherd in guarding the flock from all harm, violence and treachery; in leading forth the sheep to the pasture; in tending upon the weak, and sickly, and faint; in expelling and keeping away such as are infectious and disorderly; and in paying especial attention to the nurture and admonition of the young. For this purpose are deacons

also instituted, that while the ministry and the eldership may give themselves to the spiritual interests of the people, they may relieve them, by taking charge of the business of raising all the pecuniary resources of the church, making collections for the poor and other pious purposes; distributing these funds according to the necessities of the needy and the impoverished; and attending generally to the temporal concerns of the church. For this purpose are the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper given, that by the one children and others may be initiated into the privileges and responsibilities of the Christian family; and that by the other all its members may be enriched by Christ with all spiritual blessings. For this purpose has Christ instituted discipline, that in accordance with our present weak and imperfect state, the mistakes of his officers may be corrected, difficulties obviated, unfruitful trees trimmed and digged about, the unruly and disobedient warned, the backslider restored, and the apostate or open sinner visited with that sentence which will be a precursor of his future destiny. For this purpose is every member of the church individually and relatively of importance to its interests, and their hearty co-operation necessary to the prosperity and efficiency of the body. Ministers are like the head from which proceeds that stimulus, guidance, and direction, which are essential to the vitality, the activity, the dignity, and the harmony of the system. Ruling elders are like the joints, sinews, and nerves, which conduct the vitalizing influence of the brain to the extremities; bind together every separate limb; and thus give unity, efficiency and energy, to the entire frame. And the various members of the church resemble the lungs, the heart, the digestive organs, the hands, and the feet, by whose co-operation and harmonious play, the whole man is consecrated to God, in body, soul, and spirit; a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto him. It is therefore evidently upon the combined union, love, harmony and co-operation of each and all of these, that the prosperity of any church depends. Life, and even partial strength, may co-exist with the absence or weakness of any one member; but health, vigor, activity, and consequent success imply and require the existence and hearty consecration of ALL to the advancement of one common end. Deficiency in any one member begets weakness and inefficiency in all, and acts like

a drain upon the energy of the body, and a drag-weight clogging and hindering its progress.

Thus have we found it in our sad experience as a church.[1] We have been like the loose and separate limbs, joints, and sinews, of a dismembered frame—every one looking to his own interests, and none regarding the prosperity of the body as the subject of his own individual solicitude and responsibility.—Could we, my brethren, imagine all the several stones and timbers, which, compacted together, form this building, every one to exist in insolated separation from the rest, instead of being firmly held together by that which every one supplieth, then might we have a representation of the disadvantages under which, as a church, we have hitherto labored. As your minister, I have endeavored to instruct, to warn, to correct, to improve, and thoroughly to furnish you for every good word and work; giving to every man, whether a professor of religion or otherwise, his portion in due season, without fear or favor, partiality or hypocrisy. But when the incorruptible seed of divine truth has been thus sown in your hearts, where have been the co-workers to go about the vineyard, and by their co-operating efforts, to cover that which was exposed to the birds of the air; to plant still deeper that which had only fallen upon the surface; to foster that which had taken root; and to water that which, after it had sprung up, was withering for want of the genial and fertilizing rain? How much strength has thus been spent in vain, and how much labor has thus been given for nought! How much seed of the word has been lost; how many germinating plants have been killed by untimely exposure and neglect; and how many flourishing and healthy plants have been allowed to fade and die through utter negligence. When little difficulties and misconceptions have arisen, where have been the peace-makers, eager to obtain the promised blessing of heaven, who have removed misapprehension, satisfied doubts, soothed irritated sensibility, and hushed the first breathing of anger, dissatisfaction and discord! When temporal straits or embarrassments have come suddenly upon others, and overwhelmed their minds with gloomy pertur-

[1] This picture may apply to too many churches, and is therefore retained as delivered.

bation, where have been those friends in need who are as ready to weep with those that weep, as to rejoice with those that rejoice; and thus to nerve and cheer the heart which would otherwise shrink and tremble before the biting blast! And when any sheep of the flock has begun to wander from the fold, to neglect the green pastures of its own fertile vale, and to drink from strange fountains, where have been those watchful shepherds who have marked the first wandering footstep, and gently wooed it back to its own spiritual home? Where have been the daysmen to mediate between the pastor and his numerous flock; to hear the plaints or murmurings of both; and thus to oil the wheels which must otherwise drag heavily and with grating sound, so that the whole machinery may accomplish its designed results noiselessly and with powerful efficiency? Not that we have had no advantage from those who have labored in this field, but that through sudden and untimely death, the fewness of their number, and other causes, this influence has been, to a great extent, lost or unfelt.

But these difficulties are now, we trust, in some good measure to be obviated, by the consecration of those brethren to the work and office of the eldership whom you have with so great unanimity appointed.

AN ADDRESS TO RULING ELDERS;

Wherein is exhibited the relation of Ruling Elders to the people, to the Ministry, and to the Church at large.

Christian Brethren,—Allow me, in the name of this church and of my brethren in the ministry, to welcome you to the honor, the responsibility, and the labors of the office of Ruling Elder. The nature, end, and object, for which this office has been instituted in the church you have already heard. It stands in a threefold relation; first, to the people; secondly, to the pastor; and thirdly, to the church at large.

Your primary relation is to the members of the church. Of these you are the representatives. From their number, and by their free votes, you have been called to this honorable office. To you they have delegated in a great measure,

the exercise of their ultimate rights, in the government and discipline of the Church. You are, therefore, truly THEIR REPRESENTATIVES, and are responsible to them, and to Him who is their and your common Lord, for the manner in which you discharge your functions. For it is provided in our Form of Government, (chap. xiii. § vi.) that an elder may not only become incapable of performing the duties of his office, by age or infirmity, but may also become unacceptable in his official character to a majority of the congregation to which he belongs, though not chargeable with either heresy or immorality; and that, in such a case, the members of the church may request, or if necessary require, him to "cease to be an active elder." You will, therefore, pay all due regard to your spiritual constituents, by whom, in accordance with the example of Apostolic Christians, and the practice of the primitive and reformed churches, you have been so honorably elected to office. Ever cherish the remembrance of this relation which you sustain towards them, and the correspondent obligations under which it lays you to seek their best spiritual and Christian welfare. They have given you the highest possible testimony that they have confidence in you as Christian men, and that they esteem you very highly in love. Reciprocate these feelings in your conduct towards them. Be kindly affectioned towards them. Make their acquaintance. Visit them in their houses. Cultivate kind and friendly dispositions. Let them feel that you take an interest in them; in their children; and in all their spiritual troubles. Give them your advice, when it is desired, in reference to any worldly matter which may perplex or trouble their minds. Especially regard the young members of these families, and by your interest in their education, prospects and happiness, endeavor to secure their affection for the church of their fathers; and their hearts and lives and services for the cause of Christ, in the morning of their days. Be present, as far as practicable, at all their meetings, both on the Sabbath and in the week; and let nothing short of necessity satisfy you as an excuse for forsaking the assembling of yourselves in their meetings for prayer as well as for more public worship. Frequently visit the Sabbath School, if you can do no more, and let every meeting for the im-

provement of the young have peculiar claims on your attention and presence. If possible, be ready to offer prayer when necessary or desirable, by the bedside of the sick, the sorrowful, and the dying; or whenever and wherever you may be desired; and be ready also to give a reason to every man that asketh you of the hope that is in you; to counsel the ungodly; or to direct the awakened and inquiring sinner.

Remember, however, that while you are the representatives of the people, you represent not their WISHES and OPINIONS, but their DUTIES and OBLIGATIONS, THEIR RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES, as these are laid down in those heavenly laws to which you and they are both alike subject, and which no power on earth can either alter, modify, abridge, or enlarge. Cherish therefore, exalted views of your SPIRITUAL INDEPENDENCE AND AUTHORITY. You are officers of Christ, and in his kingdom; and within this jurisdiction no laws of man, and no whims, caprice, or passions of men, have any right to enter. Your instructions come not from man, but from Him to whom the highest among the sons of men are subject, whose will is the law of the universe, and whose word is the exposition of his will respecting the inhabitants of this lower world.[1] Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be brought into bondage by no undue regard either to the *favor* or the *frowns* of men. Be ye wise as serpents; so as to avoid giving any offence either by pride, or sycophancy; by harshness or indifference; by severity or laxity of discipline. Be very scrupulous and conscientious in discovering the path of duty; and as fearless in pursuing it, whether men will praise or whether they will condemn. Seek not popularity at the expense of fidelity; nor provoke jealousy and displeasure through any vain and wanton assumption of a reckless bluntness and harshness, either of manner or of speech. And remember that to your own Master you stand or fall, and that accordingly as you commend yourselves to His approval, will you be either condemned or rewarded, whatever may be the opinion of men.

So much for your relation to the members of the church.

[1] See the Divine Right of Church Government, page 270.

BUT YOU STAND ALSO RELATED TO ITS BISHOP OR PASTOR. For you are "the representatives of the people, chosen by them for the purpose of exercising government and discipline in conjunction with the pastor." The grand, primary, and characteristic office of the bishop is authoritatively to teach whatsoever Christ has commanded. But as the highest office includes the less, and implies the authority necessary to discharge all its functions, so does the ministry include not only the function of teaching, but also the office of ruling; not only what pertains to the office of the bishop, but also what pertains to the office of the elder and the deacon; and not only what relates to the spiritual interests of the church, but also to the general superintendence of the temporal affairs, and whatever concerns the welfare of the church. But in order that the bishops of the Church might give themselves supremely to the ministry of the word and to prayer, these other offices were created in order to aid and assist them in these several spheres; the elders in all that relates to the spiritual government of the church, and the deacons in all that has regard to the temporal interests of the congregation. And hence in the Reformed churches, in the Scotch church formerly, (and in the Free church of Scotland now,) there existed in every church, not only a spiritual court called the Session, but also what is called the Deacon's Court, composed of the pastor, elders, and deacons. So that while the pastor was recognized as head of the church in all its relations, the elders represented the interests of the people in the same various aspects; while the deacons after receiving counsel from both, carried out the common views of the whole body in all that pertained to the poor, and the outward expenditures of the church.

Such, then, is another aspect, my dear brethren, of your high calling. Your office is second in dignity and importance *only* to that of the bishopric; and you are associated with the pastor in taking the entire oversight of the flock "over which the Holy Ghost has appointed you." Much of the authority and power of your office has, by an evil and disastrous custom, fallen into other hands, or is no longer exercised at all; but it is not the less—BUT THE MORE—necessary to bring forward their nature and their claims, that, with the reviving spirit of Presbyterianism,

the office of ruling elder may be generally restored to its true elevation, and to the exercise of all its functions. The great object, therefore, of your office, so far as it respects the congregation over which you preside, is to constitute, with the pastor or bishop, a spiritual court for all matters of government and discipline; a common council by whom all its interests may be guarded and advanced; and a body of assistants and co-workers by whom the labors of one minister may suffice instead of many; his labors being subdivided and his time principally given to the pulpit, to the visitation of the sick, the inquiring and the spiritually distressed; to the public business of the church; and to the defence of the truth, not only in the pulpit but through the press, which has become, next to the pulpit, the mightiest instrumentality either for good or for evil. On you, therefore, must your minister lean as his Aarons and Hurs when wearied and faint. To you must he seek for counsel in times of perplexity and doubt. In you must he find strength and influence in carrying out the discipline of the church, and enforcing the obligations of Christian discipleship. To you must he especially look for AN EXAMPLE OF CONSISTENCY AND DEVOTEDNESS BOTH AS HEARERS AND DOERS OF THE WORD, both in your personal walk and conversation; in the Christian regulation of your families; and in your willing and ready co-operation, to the utmost of your ability, in every cause of benevolence and Christian charity.

This leads me to remind you, that by the constitution of our church YOU BEAR ALSO AN IMPORTANT RELATION TO THE CHURCH AT LARGE. For as the representatives of the people you are entitled to sit as delegates in all our ecclesiastical courts, and there to deliberate, speak, and vote, on all matters that can come before the body, and also to carry into execution all their determinations, except where they imply functions peculiar to the office of the ministry, such as presiding in any court, preaching, administering sacraments, ordaining, or pronouncing sentence of suspension, and final excommunication. In this way, the popular character of the church is effectually secured; the rights and liberties of Christ's elect people maintained inviolate; the encroachments of a spiritual hierarchy and priestly despotism checked; and the free, public, and open constitution of all

our ecclesiastical proceedings perpetuated. The recent history of our own church, and that also of our sister churches in Scotland and in Ireland, will prove to you how potent is the influence which an enlightened and devoted eldership can exert, in withstanding the attacks both of external and internal foes; in arousing a sleeping church to a due sense of its danger, and to a full exercise of its powers; and in thus lifting up a standard against the enemy, when he rushes in like a flood, either in the form of heresy, or error, or cold Laodicean formalism, or in Erastian conspiracy with the powers of this world to betray into their hands the crown and prerogatives of the only King and Head of the church. And, in other days too, as you retrace the footsteps of the flock, upon the bleak and barren moors, and by the deep and secluded valleys, or the midnight gathering by the light of lantern or torch under heaven's open canopy, you will find that had not the pastors of the church been aided by bold and fearless under-shepherds, they never could have preserved through such bloody and fiendish persecutions, and against such fearful odds, that little flock whom God has preserved upon the mountains of Piedmont, in Scotland, in Ireland, and in this wide empire, and to whom he has yet purposed "to give them the kingdom."

To you then, ye elders of the church, are committed the oracles of God. You too are set, like ministers, for the defence of the truth, and purity and liberty of the gospel. And upon you, in no inconsiderable measure, hangs the destinies of the church. Estimate then as you ought, the privilege of occupying your place when delegated to it, on the high field of our ecclesiastical legislatures and general assemblies, the exalted councils of the church. Be ready to meet every such opening by any reasonable sacrifice of time and expense. Interest your hearts in all the business and proceedings of the church. Study thoroughly its doctrines, its history, its polity, and its welfare. And whenever the war-cry of danger is heard upon its borders, be ye ready to come up as standard-bearers of the cross to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

And let this cheer and encourage you, brethren, in this arduous, self-denying, but glorious labor, that He who has called

you to the work will also fit, qualify and inspirit you for its discharge; be present with you in every emergency; guide and direct you in all time of perplexity; make you bold as lions, and harmless even as doves; give you a heart to love him, and a tongue to pray for and to praise him; fill you with joy and satisfaction in discharging your Master's work: and when the day of toil is over, and the night of rest is come, recompense you a hundred-fold for all your labors, welcome you as good and faithful servants into the joy of the Lord, and encircle your brow with a crown of glory that shall never fade away.

Neither will he leave you alone and unaided, to undertake all the duties involved in this labor of love. He who has overcome your reluctance, and silenced your objections, and put it into your hearts to enter into the vineyard, and, as He shall enable you, labor in its cultivation; he who stirred up the heart of Zerubbabel and others, in his day, will, if we pray to him in earnestness and importunity, lead others also to awake from their slumbers, and to come forth at the voice of their brethren, saying, "Here Lord are we, send us." With these encouragements, therefore, and in this hope and expectation, "be ye therefore, brethren, steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor will not be in vain in the Lord."

ADDRESS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH,

Showing their duty to the Ruling Elders.

And now, Christian friends, the members of the church, I turn myself, in closing, to you. You have heard the nature, ends and duties of the office of ruling elder expounded in your hearing; you have heard these brethren solemnly devote themselves to this high and holy calling, and promise and covenant, as God shall give them ability, faithfully to attempt the discharge of its high functions; and having freely elected these your brethren, and thus constituted them your spiritual delegates and representatives, you have now as solemnly promised with uplifted hands, "to acknowledge and receive them as your ruling elders," and

to yield them all that "honor, encouragement, and obedience," in the Lord, to which their office, according to the word of God, the constitution of our church, and the very nature of the relation itself, entitles them.

YOU ARE TO GIVE THEM HONOR. This Christianity requires. It dignifies every office, whether in the state or in the church, in the household or in society; and it requires its disciples to render to every man that honor which is his due. "Let every soul," is its voice, "be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God, the powers that be, having been instituted by God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves condemnation. Wherefore, ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. Render, therefore, to all their dues, and honor to whom honor is due." This rule is universal, but in reference to spiritual office, receives the sanction of solemn and superadded claims. "Obey," says God to Christians, "them that have the rule over *you*, and submit yourselves; for THEY watch for your souls," and your spiritual and everlasting interests, "as they that must give account," and this you are to do, "that they may give this account with joy and not with grief, for this," adds the Apostle, "would be as unprofitable for you as it would be distressing to them." It is therefore as true in religion as in the family, in every social association, and in the state, that by honoring those that are in authority we honor ourselves, and secure our own good. For as they stand as our representatives, and as the visible types and exponents of our character and laws—by honoring them we dignify those laws, give them weight and authority and power; carry them out into efficient and universal operation, and thus secure their beneficial results in the elevation of our own character, and that of our country, family, society, or church; and in the peace, harmony, integrity, and happiness, which will be thus promoted.

Give to your elders, therefore, the honor which is THEIR DUE. Hold their persons,—because you hold their office,—in reverence. Treat them with that deference and submission which will show your high estimate of those spiritual functions which they sus-

tain, as office-bearers in THE HOLIEST AND MOST EXALTED SOCIETY WHICH EXISTS AMONG MEN. In honor prefer them above others, and esteem them very highly. Consider them through the light thrown over them by the office to which you yourselves have elevated them. Cultivate, therefore, towards them in your own minds, and in the minds of your children, the feelings of love and respect, and ever treat them with a correspondent deference and regard. Thus will you exalt their office; elevate your own conceptions of the dignity of your Christian citizenship; and ennoble the character of our common Christianity.

BUT YOU ARE NOT ONLY TO GIVE THEM HONOR, BUT ENCOURAGEMENT ALSO. You are well aware how reluctantly these brethren have yielded to your and my solicitations to accept of this appointment and to enter upon this office. There is not one of them,—I bear them record,—who does not shrink from the undertaking, and enter upon it with fear and trembling, and in much conscious weakness. There is not one of them who would not gladly have remained in the ranks of private citizenship. But they have yielded as much to your importunity as to the sense of duty, and they now throw themselves, (and they are well entitled to it,) upon your most kind and hearty encouragement.

And how can you encourage them? You can do this, first, and above all other ways, by constantly commending them to Him who can give them courage, who can take away their fearful and timid hearts, and give them great boldness and confidence through the strength and power of his almighty grace. You can do this by giving, in your kind and respectful treatment, in your willing co-operation, and in your readiness to overlook any deficiencies, increased confidence of success and greater zeal in aiming at higher attainments. And by your Christian humility, consistency, and growth in holiness; and your steadfast attendance upon every means of grace, you can inspire them with courage, spirit, and strength of mind. You can, in these and other ways, by your union and co-operation, your concurrence in their decisions, and your support when opposition would be made against the enforcements of the truth and order of God's house, embolden and animate their hearts, and inspirit them to go forward with untiring zeal.

And should any of you differ in opinion from the plans they may recommend, or the judgments they may decree, remember that they are set over you in the Lord, and that unless they have acted clearly contrary to the divine law, or delivered an opinion in opposition to the mind of Christ, or adopted a course of policy derogatory to the heavenly institute; you are under obligation to submit, and not to embroil the peace and harmony of the church by contending for your private interpretations and your personal preferences. And should any of you, which may God forbid, ever become the subjects of their righteous condemnation, either on the ground of heresy or immorality, or swearing, or Sabbath-breaking, or neglect of the worship and ordinances of the church, or failure to observe family and secret worship, or penurious and covetous refusal to give of your substance and according to your ability, to the cause of Christ, or for any other sufficient reason—I CHARGE YOU TO REMEMBER THAT IT WILL BE AT YOUR PERIL TO RESIST AND DISOBEY. For they bear not rule in vain. The sword of spiritual authority has been freely and lawfully put into their hands, and they will, and cannot but be "a terror to evil-doers." For just so far as they carry out the laws of Christ, they are sustained by the power and authority of Christ, so that "what they bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whomsoever they condemn on earth shall be condemned in heaven." They are the ministers of Christ. They act in his name. They enforce his laws. They pronounce sentence according to his immutable decrees. And in doing so he is with them, and he will fully sustain them. And unless the condemned violator of Christ's law shall humble his soul in penitence and sorrow, and shall turn from his evil and wicked way, Christ will frown upon him, and write bitter things against him; and if he continue obstinate and obdurate, will finally smite him with his iron sceptre, and dash him in pieces like a potter's vessel. But rather, O thou divine Redeemer, so work in the hearts and minds of this people, that they shall ever serve thee in uprightness and sincerity all the days of their life, "until we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and

fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

CHAPTER II.

In which it is shown that in Scripture the term Presbyter is always applied to the Preacher, and not to the Ruling Elder; with an examination of 1 Timothy 5: 17.

It is unquestionably true, as has been already shown, that there is both principle and precedent in Scripture to warrant the election, by every church, of representatives of the people, to act with the bishop or pastor in conducting the government and discipline of the church. We found that such officers sat with the apostles and presbyters in the councils of the church as delegated commissioners, under the title of "THE BRETHREN," (Acts 1: 15–26, 6: 1–6, and 15,[1])—and they may also very probably be referred to in other passages.[2]

[1] In none of these cases can we suppose that all the Christians were present, for Christ we know appeared to *five hundred* brethren, and at the time of the council at Jerusalem there were about 8,000 believers. These BRETHREN, therefore, represented *all*, and acted in their name. See Neander's Hist. of the Chr. Rel. and Ch. vol. 1, p. 205, and note, English edition.

[2] E. g. 1 Cor. 12: 28, Rom. 12: 8, and Matt. 18: 15–17. That the word church here means an assembly of rulers meeting together in one ecclesiastical judicatory, see largely proved in Dr. Ayton's Orig. Constit. of the Church. ch. ii. § 3, pp. 63, 64. Cartwright's Confut. of the Rhemists on Matt. 18: 15–17. In the Form of Gov't of the Waldenses, this passage is rendered, "tell to the guides whereby the church is ruled." Dr. Miller on Eldership, p. 108, Am. ed. Coleman's Primitive Church, pp. 62, 63. Brown's Dict. of the Bible, Art. Church. Livingstone's Theology, p. 251. Rutherford's Due Right of Presbyteries, &c. 4to. London, 1644, at pp. 309, 314, 322, 489–491. See also pp. 316, 348. See also his Plea for Paul's Presbyterie, 4to. London, 1642, p. 85, &c. Gillespie's Aaron's Rod Blossoming, 4to. London, 1646. pp. 294–297, and 350–467. See further Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici. by the London ministers, 4to. London, 1654, p. 208, &c. See also many authorities pro-

That such a class of officers were also recognized in the primitive church, and by many of the fathers, cannot, we think, be doubted by any impartial reader, and has been often satisfactorily proved.[1] And that the churches very early adopted the plan of having such representatives of the people, is rendered still more certain by the existence of such officers among the Waldenses and the Syrian Christians.

Thus far we agree in opinion with the standard authorities of our church, in believing in THE SCRIPTURAL CHARACTER AND CLAIMS of such officers in the church. But in regard to the application of the term PRESBYTER in Scripture and in the fathers to the ruling elder, we are obliged to dissent from the commonly received opinions. We are still persuaded that both in Scripture and in the fathers the term PRESBYTER is confined to the teachers or bishops of the church.

That such is the case in Scripture, we infer from the fact that the word PRESBYTER is there used synonymously with the term BISHOP, as is now admitted by ALL writers, both prelatical and Presbyterian.[2] Now the characteristic function and duty of THE BISHOP, as laid down in Scripture, is, the preaching of the gospel and the instruction of the Christian people.[3] This indeed has been most strangely questioned, but in manifest contradiction to the express and pointed declaration of the Word of God. No words can be used by which the office of public teaching could be more clearly defined, than are found in those several passages, in which the terms presbyter and bishop are interchangeably employed.[4] Such also was the duty imposed by the Apos-

duced in Paget's Def. of Pres. Ch. Gov't. London, 1641, pp. 50, 51. See also the author's Ecclesiastical Catechism, p. 8, &c. Burnet on the XXXIX Art. p. 281.

[1] See Dr. Miller's work on the Ruling Elders, and also his Letters on the Christian Ministry, and all the works on Presbyterianism.

[2] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 108, &c.

[3] See 1 Tim. 3: 1–8, Titus 1: 5–9, and 1 Peter 5: 1–5, and 1 Tim. 5: 17, and Vitringa, p. 484.

[4] Neander in his Preface to Coleman's Primitive Church, p. 16, says, "And yet a distinction is also made between these pastors and teachers, inasmuch as the qualifications for the outward government of the church, κυβερνησις, were different from those which were requisite for the guidance of the church by the

tle Paul upon the ministers of Ephesus, whom he in the same breath calls both bishops and presbyters.[1] In exhorting the Hebrew Christians to "remember them that have the rule over them," (i. e. their presbyters,) he explains his meaning by adding, "who have spoken unto you," that is, preached to you, "the word of God."[2] This point is to our minds plain and palpable, for as the great duty enjoined by Christ in his commission was the preaching of the gospel; and presbyters or bishops are, as we believe, the only ministers under that commission, it follows that preaching is their chief and distinguishing function.[3]

But if preaching, including the duties of presiding in the church, of conducting the public worship of God, of baptizing and administering the Lord's Supper,[4]—if these are the work and duty of the bishop or presbyter, and are *admitted* by all parties not to be the functions of the ruling elder, then the presumption is very strong against the *modern assumption* that the terms presbyter and bishop are applied in Scripture both to the teachers of the church and to a class of officers who did not teach. Nor is this presumption weakened by an appeal to the usages of the Jewish synagogue; for while it is true that there were in each synagogue a senate, composed of elders or rulers as they were called, they were not ordained with imposition of hands,[5] whereas

preaching of the word, διδασκαλια. The first belonged especially to the presbyters or bishops who stood at the head of the organization for the outward government of the church. Certain it is, at least, that they did not all possess the gift of teaching as διδασκαλοι, teachers."

[1] See Acts 20: 28–31.

[2] Hebrews 13: 7, 17.

[3] See full on this point in the author's work on Presbytery and Prelacy, ch. v., and also ch. iv., and in the Divine Right of the Gospel Ministry, by the London Ministers.

[4] See do. do. ch. v.

[5] Lightfoot (Works, vol. viii. pp. 459, 460) says:—"The ordaining of the elders and beheading the heifer, is by the three." In this thing, therefore, this present action agreeth with the common usage of the Synagogue,—that three persons, Simeon, Lucius, and Manaen, lay their hands on two, that were to be sent out,—Paul and Barnabas. But in that they lay on their hands, they do, also, recede from the usual custom. "After what manner is the ordaining of elders; for ever? Not that they should lay their hands upon the head of an elder, but only should call him 'Rabbi,' and say to him, 'Behold thou art or-

the public teachers and preachers of the synagogue were not allowed to enter upon their work until they were ordained to that particular function,[1]—they were more commonly called "the seniors

dained, and thou hast power of judging,' &c. Laying on of hands in the ordination of elders was hardly used at all, either under the first temple, or before or under the second temple. It was not under the second temple, if we may believe the Rabbin newly quoted; or at least, if it was used, it was abolished at last. And before the second temple, where is there any sign or footstep of such a thing?"

Vitringa, it is true, is of opinion that Lightfoot had inferred more from the words of Maimonides than is becoming,(1) and he therefore thinks, both from him and other Jewish authorities which he quotes, that there were two methods of induction into office, one by imposition of hands together with the words "*ecce tu es promotus*,"—"and now behold, be thou promoted,"—and another in which the words alone, without any imposition of hands, took place. This he substantiates from the Gemara, when it is asked, "whether ordination is performed with the hand only? He replies, not so, but with the declaration also." And Tacutheus is quoted, saying, "But ordination is not performed with the hands only, but also by pronouncing the words only (*sed etiam sermone solo*)."(2) Witsius is of opinion that the ordination of the electors (*electorum*) was by imposition of hands, and that this was different from that by which the senior (*senior*) was created.(3) And with this opinion Vitringa on the whole agrees.(4) He adds, "Perhaps we may conclude this much, that while the affairs of the Hebrews flourished in Canaan, the presidents and ministers of the Synagogue who depended for their support upon the Synagogue, were confirmed in their office by imposition of hands."(5) In short, only those who are called presbyters, Rabbi or Doctor, were ordained."(6)

[1] Speaking of their "preachers," Lightfoot says, (Works, vol. 5. pp. 121, 122,) "Now none of these prementioned were admitted to this public employment of teaching and preaching, but he was first ordained, and had ordination, as a state-call and commission to that office."

"And they used to ordain men to particular employment in the public administration: and they might not go beyond that particular to which they were ordained."

"'They have power (saith Maimonides) to appoint whom they will to par-

(1) Petrus Cunæus in his De Repub. Hebr. cap. 12, however, takes the same view as Lightfoot, and is quoted with approbation by the London ministers in the Divine Right of the Gospel Ministry, Part 1, pp. 184, 185.

(2) De Vet. Synag. pp. 837, 838.

(3) Miscell. Sacr. Lib. ii. Dissert iii § 46. De Heb. Synag.

(4) Ibid. p. 838. (5) Ibid. p. 839.

(6) Bernard's Synagogue of the Church, pp. 85, 86, 169, 183, and Whately's Origin of Romish Errors, p. 107, ch. ii. § 5.

and senators of the tribes,"[1]—and the officer whose duty and privilege it was to preside in the synagague, and either to preach himself or to appoint those who should, was denominated "bishop" or "overseer,"[2] and was required to be a doctor, and

ticular matters. As, for example, there was an exceeding great wise man, that was fit to teach all the law, every whit; it was in the power of the Sanhedrim to ordain him, so as that he might not judge, or that he might not teach about bound and loose; or they might give him license to teach about bound and loose, but not to judge in matters of money; or they gave him power to judge in this matter, but not to judge in matters of damage,' &c. Thus curious and circumspect they were in and about the matter of ordination, and concerning a lawful and authoritative designation of public teachers and judges to their peculiar and particular employment in the public, to fix them within their compass and line, and that every one might not intrude upon what ministerial or magisterial ministration he would. And, therefore, it was far from being a common use, or from being any use at all, among the Jews in their church, to let any mechanical, or uncalled and unordained men, to step up into the doctor's chair, or minister's pulpit, to read divinity publicly, or to preach in their synagogues,—as impudency or folly would put them forward on it; but they had a solemn state-call or dimission into such employments, by a lawful ordination by men themselves ordained.

"But if any man came in the spirit of a prophet, and took on him to preach under that notion, he found permittance under that notion; yet was there not immunity and liberty for any whosoever to become preacher upon that term, and so to continue, but the Sanhedrim was to judge concerning false prophets; and he that was not a prophet, and yet would be preaching as a prophet, did it at his own peril. This, then, was that that procured our Saviour liberty to preach, and audience to his preaching, in every synagogue where he came; because he came not only in the name, but also in the visible power and demonstration of a prophet, doing such wondrous signs and miracles, as that his prophetic call could not be denied, but he was glorified of all."

[1] See Lightfoot's Works, vol. viii. p. 72, and vol. iii. p. 242.

[2] Thus Benjamin of Tudela, speaking of the city of Ispahan, says, (see Vitringa, de Synagog. Vet. lib. ii. cap. iii., and lib. i. cap. xi., and Bernard's Synagogue and the Church, pp. 146, 147, and p. 197, and especially pp. 101, 102,) "where there were fifteen thousand Jews, that excellent Doctor Sarschalon, who is the bishop, lives there." Speaking of another city, he says, "In it are fifty thousand Jews, and Rabbi Obadiah is their bishop. The same name is given to the pastors of the modern Synagogue."

"Besides these," says Lightfoot, "there was the public minister of the Synagogue, who prayed publicly, and took care about the reading of the law, and sometimes preached, if there were not some other to discharge this office. This person was called 'the Angel of the Church,' and 'The Chazan or bishop of the

one who had ministered unto a doctor, before he could become eligible to the office.[1] It is thus apparent, first, that the senators in the Jewish synagogue were not preachers or teachers, though like many other individuals they might be called upon to speak unto the people; secondly, that the preacher was exclusively denominated *overseer*, *angel*, and *bishop*, although as a ruler he was at the same time an elder, the greater including the less; and thirdly, that imposition of hands was confined to the overseers and bishops of the synagogue.[2] The presumption, therefore, which exists against that interpretation of the terms presbyter and bishop in the New Testament, which makes them applicable to the mere "*ruling elder*," or representative of the people, remains in all its force, if it is not greatly strengthened by an appeal to the government of the synagogue.

And hence Vitringa is led to exclaim, in alluding to the supposition we are controverting, in the light of his most learned and thorough investigation into the constitution of the Jewish synagogue: "And can any one then dare seriously to assert

Congregation.' The Aruch gives the reason of the name. The Chazan (says he) is the Angel of the Church, (or the public minister,) and the Targum renders the word רואה by the word תיזה, one that oversees; for it is incumbent on him to oversee, how the reader reads, and whom he may call out to read in the law." The public minister of the synagogue himself read not the law publicly; but every Sabbath he called out seven of the synagogue (on other days, fewer) whom he judged fit to read. He stood by him that read, with great care observing that he read nothing either falsely or improperly,—and calling him back and correcting him if he had failed in any thing. And hence he was called תיזן that is επισκοπος, or 'Overseer.' Certainly the signification of the word 'Bishop,' or 'Angel of the Church,' had been determined with less noise, if recourse had been made to the upper fountains,—and men had not vainly disputed about the signification of words, taken I know not whence. The service and worship of the temple being abolished as being ceremonial, God transplanted the worship and public adoration of God used in the Synagogues, which was moral, into the Christian Church,—to wit, the public ministry, public prayers, reading God's word, and preaching, &c. Hence the names of the Ministers of the Gospel were the very same,—'the Angel of the Church,' and 'the Bishop,'—which belonged to the Ministers in the Synagogues."—(Lightfoot's Works, vol. ii. pp. 88, 89, and Bernard's Synagogue, ch. x.)

[1] See Vitringa and Bernard as above.

[2] See do. do. lib. i. cap. ix. and Bernard's Synagogue, p. 84, and p. 58.

and to defend the position, that to these *lay elders* the name of bishop or the name of *pastor* can be appropriated? And if no one *can so dare*, then the question is settled concerning them, since no other *presbyters* are acknowledged or constituted in the church by the apostles, except those who are at the same time PASTORS AND BISHOPS." "It is therefore," he concludes, "certain and indubitable that the term *presbyters*, in the writings of the Apostles, means one and the same thing with *pastors and bishops*."[1]

This presumption is further confirmed by the fact, that in all the passages of Scripture in which the term *presbyter* occurs, (omitting for the present the disputed passage in 1 Timothy 5: 17,) it evidently refers to the principal, and in many cases to the *only* officer at that time appointed in the infant churches,[2] which must of course refer to the preacher rather than to the mere ruler of the people. (Acts 14: 23. Phil. 1: 1. Titus 1: 5–9, &c.) The only objection of any force to this position, is that on which Dr. Miller seems mainly to rely, namely, that this view of the meaning of this term would imply the existence of a plurality of teachers in connection with one church. But this, instead of being an objection, is, on the contrary, an argument in favor of our interpretation; for that such really was the fact cannot be questioned. In the Synagogue the general rule was that there should be a plurality of the chief rulers or bishops, and the exception to this rule was the existence of only one.[3] That such was the case in the time of our Saviour is most certain. We have evidence that there were many rulers in the one Synagogue who of course formed a council. Thus the Evangelist Luke, speaking of St. Paul and his companions, says, "they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath

[1] De Synag. Vet. pp. 484, 485. And if any one can judge on this point, surely Vitringa with his disposition to sustain ruling elders, (see page 484,) and his immense learning, both in Jewish and patristical lore, was the man.

[2] It deserves, however, to be remarked, that there does not appear to have been any ruling elders in the church session of Antioch." Bib. Repert. 1843, p. 327. See also Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 174, &c. and Phil. 1: 1.

[3] See proofs of this given from Jewish writers in Vitringa, lib. i, cap. vi., and p. 874, and Bernard, pp. 56–58. There were always two in each Synagogue who could teach, &c.—Lightfoot, vol v. p. 119.

day, and sat down; and after the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them." Now these rulers, as far as we can judge from the context, were equal in rank, dignity, and office, and constituted, most probably, the presbytery of the synagogue of Antioch. In another chapter the same Evangelist mentions by name two of the rulers of the synagogue at Corinth, viz. Crispus and Sosthenes. The Evangelist Mark informs us that Jairus was *one* of the rulers of the synagogue at Capernaum. The New Testament, then, confirms our view of the government of the synagogue; and though we meet with passages in which but the one ruler is mentioned, still this does not subvert our position; the government of the synagogue being sometimes confided to one Rabbi.[1]

That such was the case in the apostolic churches also, there is abundant evidence to prove. The church at Jerusalem was governed for many years by the college of presbyters constituted by the Apostles.[2] There was a plurality of "bishops" in the church at Philippi. (Phil. 1: 1.) There were several teachers in the church at Antioch. (Acts 13: 1, &c.) And that we may not delay, there were many bishops in the church at Ephesus. (Acts 20.)

Conformable to this was the practice of the early churches. For while in many cases, as in that of Gregory Thaumaturgus, whose congregation numbered seventeen persons, there was only one bishop, or presbyter, yet generally a plurality did in fact exist, and were very necessary, when we consider the circumstances of the church at that time, and its relations to the infidel world around it. And as to support, we know that all the officers were provided for out of a common stock; that the weekly collections

[1] See Vitringa, p. 874.

[2] Professor Jameson in his "Sum of the Episcopal Controversy," p. 87, says, "that as no kirk was subject to another, so no pastor was subject to another, but that the pastors in every particular kirk were associated into presbyteries, and did act in complete parity." "And now," he adds, "there was in Jerusalem a fully organized kirk, a kirk enjoying both bishops and deacons, *the only proper kirkmen*, so to speak, and officers of Christ's appointment;" p. 89, he adds, "there were doubtless also, at this time in the kirk diverse grave and venerable men, *chosen from among the people to represent them, and assist the pastors*." See also Presbytery and Prelacy, pp. 28, 36, 41.

for this purpose were very liberal; that many supported themselves out of their own resources; that many followed in part some lucrative employment; that the presbyters all lived together, with their president; and that their mode of living was at first strictly economical.

Jerome, speaking of this subject, says: "The smallness of their number makes the deacons honorable, the crowd of presbyters makes them contemptible." Eusebius informs us, that about the middle of the third century, there were in the church of Rome forty-six presbyters, and but seven deacons. And so far did the abuse proceed, that the Emperor Justinian found it necessary to limit the number of presbyters, permitting no more than sixty to be ordained for the church of Constantinople.

And however this practice was abused, as it undoubtedly was in after times, we can easily understand its wisdom and propriety in the first age of Christianity. For at that time all were enemies and none friends to the cause. Danger was therefore imminent, trials manifold, comforts few, and support scanty. By living together, several bishops could constitute a common council, a bond of union and of strength, a source of consolation, and an economical household.[1] From these centres of influence they could make the word of God to sound forth into all the region round about; and from time to time, as circumstances warranted, they could plant other churches and settle other presbyters over them. And when any country had become Christianized, and the necessity for such concentration was removed, we can as easily perceive, how the members of this common council or presbytery would be separated and fixed over their respective churches, which they would govern in connexion with their respective officers. Thus naturally would arise the present form of our free presbyteries, the several members living apart but acting in common and in stated assemblies; and thus also do we see how necessity, as in the case of our missionary brethren, or persecution and danger, as in the case of the Reformers, again leads to the *concentrated* form of the original and apostolic presbytery.

[1] The clergy in England continued to live together in communities to a late period. See Barnes' Eccl. Law, vol. 3, page 398. And this we know was the custom of the Culdees, both in Scotland and in Ireland.

These facts are essential to the proper understanding of the polity of the New Testament churches, and the manner in which prelacy could so insidiously and "by little and little," as Jerome says (*paulatim*), creep into the church.[1] For just as in the Synagogue one of the overseers must necessarily have presided, so in the apostolic churches one would be chosen as president and stated pastor of the local church, while the others labored as missionaries or evangelists in the surrounding country, in the same way as we still have our moderators or presidents of presbyteries which have been in some cases made permanent.[2] But as the establishment of this point is of great importance to our argument, we would here adduce what we have said elsewhere upon this point.

Such is the view given of the apostolic churches by Archbishop Potter, who allows that there was a college of presbyters ordained over the church of Jerusalem, who were plainly concerned in the care of the church.[3] 'Our fourth proposition,' says Grotius, 'is this, that *this* episcopacy is approved by divine law, or as Bucer says, it seemed good to the Holy Ghost that one *among the presbyters* should be charged with a peculiar care.'[4]

In the absence of the apostles, the presbyters, as we have seen, were accustomed to preside in the church at Jerusalem.[5] The presbyters of the church of Antioch must also have had one of their number to act as president when they were assembled together for the ordination of Barnabas and Saul.[6] Such appears to have been the general practice of the churches, in all of which, according to the necessity of the case, there were a plurality of presbyters, one of their number being elected to preside in their councils; a custom which is still maintained in all its original simplicity by Presbyterians.

[1] This point is urged with much force by Vitringa de Syn. Vet. See p. 488, 474, 864.

[2] See the author's Lectures on the Apostolic Succession, p. 42.

[3] On Ch. Gov't, c. 3, p. 107, Eng. edition.

[4] Sacra, c. 11.

[5] See Lord Barrington's Works, vol. ii. pp. 165, 175. Also Benson on the Relig. Worship of the Christians, c. 3, § 2, p. 83.

[6] Acts xiii. 1, &c. See Presbytery, &c. ch. vii.

A plurality of bishops, presbyters, or governors, says Blondel, existed at one and the same time, in one and the same church. He further supposes that these pastors, or bishops, were all indued with equal power and honor; that the eldest minister, by virtue of his seniority, was constantly the moderator among his colleague presbyters; that this moderator was subject to the power of the presbytery, and obeyed its commands, with no less submission than did the meanest of their number; and that while he had chief power in the college, he had properly no power *over* it or independently of it.[1]

That officers of this kind might be expected in the apostolic churches would appear from the fact that such chairmen, presidents, or moderators, are necessary in all assemblies, where several have a right to speak, and are therefore constantly appointed. There was, we know, such an order of presidents among the presbyters who managed, in common, the ecclesiastical affairs of the synagogue.[2] These are several times introduced to our notice in the sacred volume, as presiding in the Jewish synagogues, and as giving liberty to preach.[3] And it would appear to be very probable, that Peter was president, chairman, or speaker in the college of the apostles,[4] and also in the church of Jerusalem, in which the twelve apostles acted conjointly, and among whom, until their dispersion, Peter *probably* acted as moderator.[5]

Such officers, therefore, would naturally suggest themselves to the apostolic churches, especially as our Saviour had directed them to the synagogue for their exemplar.[6] And when we con-

[1] Apol. Præfat, pp. 6, 7, 18, 35. See Jameson's Cyp. Isot. pp. 231, 232, vol. ii. pp. 77, 78. See also Goode's Divine Rule of Faith, ch. viii. This writer denies that any thing more can be proved from Scripture or from primitive antiquity.

[2] See this position fully sustained by Vitringa de Vet. Synagog. lib. iii, c. 9, p. 727, &c. Reland's Antiq. Jennings' Jewish Antiq. vol. ii. pp. 54, 55, b. ii. c. i. Also in Gillespie's Ch. of Scotland, part i. c. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9; and in a Confut. of I. S. Vind. of the Princ. of the Cypr. Age, p. 151. Baxter's Treatise on Episcopacy, p. 13, § 19.

[3] Acts 13 : 15; Luke 13 : 14; Acts 18 : 8 and 17.

[4] Whately's Kingdom of Christ, Essay ii. § 7, p. 72.

[5] Peirce's Vind. of Presb. Ordin. part ii. p. 88, and elsewhere.

[6] Matt. 18.

sider the variety of gifts then enjoyed by the church, and the number who would have a consequent right to speak, and how much of the edification of the church depended on the order with which such persons spoke, judged, prophesied, prayed, sung, and exercised their gifts generally, we will understand how necessary and useful this office then was in all their meetings.[1] Such an officer was no less important for the hearing and deciding of all the controversies about worldly matters which arose among the brethren; to give advice in all difficult cases;[2] to watch over the general order; to guard against abuses; to admonish the faulty; and to guide the public deliberations.[3] In the beginning, therefore, one of the bishops or presbyters presided, under the title of *proestos senior probatus*, &c., that is, the president or approved elder. In the second century they began to give this officer exclusively the title of bishop, calling the other bishops presbyters or elders, to distinguish them from the stated president.[4] In this way the Scriptures and the primitive fathers are harmonized, and the gradual introduction of the doctrine of prelacy is made apparent and easy, the prelate being the chief presbyter, and the other presbyters his colleagues.[5]

Allusion appears to be made to such presidents or moderators, in several passages of the New Testament. They are referred to in that passage already considered, where the apostle says, 'the spirits of the prophets (that is, says lord Barrington, of some of the prophets) are subject to the (other) prophets.'[6]

[1] Lord Barrington's Works, vol. i. pp. 85, 86. The same view is presented by Forbes, in his Irenicum, pp. 242, 243, 245. In Baxter on Episc. p. 70.

[2] See Macknight's Com. on 1 Tim. 5: 17, vol. iii. p. 205, where the duties of such an officer are fully described. Benson, in his Essay on the Public Worship of the Early Christians, very fully establishes the fact of such presiding officers. See Paraphrase on St. Paul's Epistles, pp. 117, 119, c. 3, § 1, § 3, and § 6.

[3] Neander's Hist. of the First Planting of Christianity, vol. i. pp. 169, 170.

[4] See Boyse's Anct. Episcopacy, Pref. p. ix. and Neander's Hist. of the First Plant. of Christianity, pp. 169, 170. Also Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 77.

[5] Benson on Relig. Worship of Christians, c. iii. § 6, p. 95.

[6] 1 Cor. 14: 32.

'It is most natural to think the full meaning of this place to be that the spirits of the prophets, who prophesied or exhorted, were, when duly regulated, subject to the prophets who presided.'[1] Spiritual gifts, as we know, were very generally bestowed upon the members of the church of Corinth.[2] Their possessors, as we are also informed, were apt to put the public assemblies into confusion by their disorderly exercise; by their strife and emulation; and by all speaking together, and in unknown tongues.[3] The apostle, therefore, directs that they should speak one by one; that whilst one spake the others should sit still and judge; and that the spirits of those who were led to exercise their gifts, should be subject to those who presided.

The Thessalonians also enjoyed a large measure of these spiritual gifts,[4] and stood in need of the same wise direction. We learn, too, that there was a synagogue in Thessalonica,[5] and that some of the Jews received the gospel, and united in forming a Christian church, in connection with a great multitude of those Gentiles who had become proselytes of the gate, and worshippers of the one only and true God.[6] It is also probable, that their teachers were converts from Judaism, or, at least, proselyted Gentiles. But if so, they had been all accustomed to the ecclesiastical government of a number of presbyters, with a president who moderated their proceedings, and would naturally, therefore, adopt this plan as the policy of their church. Some of the church, however, appear to have refused to subject themselves to their teachers, and to this plan of discipline, and gave themselves up to disorder, and confusion, under the pretence of edifying others. The apostle, therefore, beseeches them to 'know,' reverence, and respect, 'those that labor among them,' as their stated ministers, 'and are over (or preside over) you,' that is, says Doddridge, those 'who preside over your assemblies, and moderate in them.[7] In this way, the apostle admonishes them to 'be at peace among themselves,' and 'to warn them that are unruly,' or disorderly, proudly refusing, like sol-

[1] Lord Barrington's Works, p. 84. [2] See the Epistles. [3] 1 Cor. c. 14.
[4] Acts 17: 4; 1 Thess. 5: 19–21; Barrington, p. 84.
[5] Acts 18: 1. [6] Acts 17.
[7] In loco. Note.

diers who will not keep their ranks or know their colors, to concur with the arrangements of their overseers. The apostle here appears to distinguish the presbyters into three classes: 1, those who labored, that is, for the extension of the church by the conversion of Jews and Gentiles; 2, those who presided or governed in all its domestic services and worship; and 3, those who, while the others presided and governed, were employed in the instruction and admonition of the assembled Christians. He therefore in effect exhorted them, 'to take care that their presbyters be supplied with every necessary, first of all those among them who, with all their might, labored to propagate the faith of Christ in the country around, and in the next place those who governed the church, and admonished and instructed them by their voice and example.'[1]

Allusion is probably made to the same office, in the epistle to the church at Rome, which was in a great measure composed of converted Jews or proselytes, who then swarmed in Rome. For in reference to the diversity of spiritual gifts, and the various modes of ministry which they occasioned, the apostle says, 'he that ruleth let him do it with diligence.'[2] The original word (προϊσταμενος) means, unquestionably, 'he who presides,' and refers to ecclesiastical office. Some of the presbyters were teachers, and others rulers, or presidents, according to their gifts. Those that were called to exercise the office of ruler or president, were required to do it with attention and zeal. The word, which thus plainly refers to ecclesiastical office, and to some office of presidency in the church, is as certainly used in 1 Thess. 5: 12, and in 1 Tim. 3: 4, 12, to designate those who held the office of teacher. And hence it would appear, that in the apostolic churches there were those who held the double office of teacher, and governor or president.[3]

A similar allusion is made in 1 Cor. 12: 28, where the apostle, in an enumeration of the same diversified ministers, both extraordinary and ordinary, speaks of governments (κυβερνησεις) as

[1] Mosheim Comment. on the Aff. of Christ. before Constantine, vol. i. pp. 217, 218, Vidal.

[2] Rom. 12: 8.

[3] See Stuart's Comment. in loco.

corresponding to those that preside or rule. This word, also, means guidance, direction, steering, as in the case of the pilot of a ship. Hence, many critics understand it here, as designating the office of a ruler or president in the church. Nor can we see any strength in the objection urged against this interpretation, founded on the low place the office is made to assume, seeing it was but the exercise of the office of teacher, already mentioned, in this particular way of occasional, or stated superintendence and direction. It is, therefore, purposely classed by the apostle among the lowest offices, and such as were mutable, that it might not be exalted into a distinct and separate order, or be supposed to imply prerogatives superior to those of the teachers in general.[1]

The same allusion would appear to be made by the apostle, in writing to the Hebrew converts throughout the world, 'Remember them who have the rule over you, (*ηγουμενους*,) and who have spoken unto you the word of God.' 'Obey them that have the rule over you, (*τοις ηγουμενοις*,) and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account.[2]

Pamelius, commentator of Tertullian, in reference to this passage in which he says that "certain approved seniors preside," says: "Those, he says, preside who by all the Greeks are called *presbyteri*, but by us seniors; that is, not all, but those who are approved by the testimony of all."[3]

We are now prepared to consider the meaning of that passage in 1 Tim. 5: 17, which is supposed to be decisive of the question as to the application to ruling elders of the title of presbyters.

[1] This is the main objection of Stuart, who gives one view in his text, and the opposite in an elaborate excursus. Our view of this passage is that taken by Mr. Thorndike, who says, "Those of the presbyters who preached not, are here called by the apostle *governments*, and the deacon's helps, or assistants, to the government of presbyters; so that it is not to be translated helps in governments, but helps and governments," since "there were two sorts of the presbyter's office in teaching and governing, the one whereof some attained not, even in the apostles' times."—Prim. Govt. in Jameson's Cyp. p. 550.

[2] Heb. 13: 1, and 17.

[3] See quoted in loco, and in Jameson's Culdees.

"Let the presbyters who rule well," (προεστωτες πρεσβυτεροι,) that is, who preside well, directing and managing the public worship, and the other interests of the church, "be counted worthy of double honor, (or stipend,) especially they who (besides these duties, continue zealously to) labor in word and doctrine." It here appears that there were two departments in which presbyters might render service to the church; they might be especially devoted to the business of teaching and preaching, or they might be appointed presidents, (προεστωτες,) *standing over, taking care of, serving and moderating the councils* of the church; so that, whilst teaching and preaching, they might also in their turn, or when so required, act as presidents or moderators. It is thus that Maimonides, in his work on the Sanhedrim, describes the bishop of the synagogue, to which the apostle here doubtless alludes, as "the presbyter who labored in word and doctrine," employing, as it were the very words of the apostle, and proving that the same presbyter who taught, might also preside or rule. Hence, Neander says, "that while all the ministers of the synagogue were called *elders*, those who presided were called, among other names, by this very title of προεστωτες. Milton also shows, that προεστως is nothing else than presiding presbyter.

All presbyters, it is to be observed, were thus officially entitled to rule or preside, and at first they may have done so alternately, since they are always spoken of in the plural, until the rule was adopted, that the senior presbyter should statedly preside. But some presbyters were not qualified to teach well, though well adapted to preside and take charge of the local church, and if found able and faithful in the discharge of this duty, they were, says the apostle, worthy of honor.

The term προεστως, and the kindred words in 1 Thess. 5 : 12, and Heb. 13 : 7, 17, are therefore regarded by Gillespie, who was a leading member of the Westminster Assembly, as ordinary titles of the ordained pastor or minister of the church.[1] And it is a further confirmation of this meaning of the word, that the term priest, which has never been thought to refer to any officer

[1] Miscellany Questions, ch. ii. § 7, p. 22.

but the ordained minister,[1] "cometh, we know," says Cartwright,[2] "not of sacerdos; but that it cometh of presbyter, for in Greek προεστως approacheth far nearer unto priest than πρεσβυτερος. In Latin the word præses (that may be so called of præest) is much nearer priest than presbyter. And as for the French and Italian, considering that they are daughters of the Latin tongue, from whence commonly they are derived, it is apparent that they are rather derived of the words before mentioned, which are natural Latin words, than of presbyter, which is Greek born, howsoever it is (by use) devised in the Latin tongue." Presbyter and bishop were therefore both of them titles of the Christian minister, and in their distinctive meaning applied only to them; the term presbyter being adopted from the Jewish synagogue, and the term bishop from the Greek language.[3]

ALL THE PRESBYTERS HERE SPOKEN OF, WERE THEREFORE TEACHERS, AND CALLED TO MINISTER IN WORD AND DOCTRINE. The qualifications necessary for a teacher are, we have seen, every where required by this same apostle, of presbyters or bishops, (1 Tim. 3: 2, Titus 1: 9, &c.) when he sets himself explicitly and fully to define the office and duties of the presbyter; and therefore we must carry these explicit definitions of the office into the interpretation of the present passage. The term *presbyters* here, therefore, must refer to teachers, since we have in the previous history heard of no others; and the fact that all are also characterized as those that "rule," is in no way inconsistent with this view, since we have proved that this function of government or jurisdiction, as well as that of teaching, belongs to all

[1] In its present acceptation, this word, as synonymous with *sacerdos*, is most dangerous and heretical, since it implies the offering of sacrifice. The word ιερευς, of which it is a translation, is *never* therefore, in the New Testament applied to *its* ministers, but only to the Jewish or Pagan priests. There is no priest under the New Testament, except Christ its head, who is a priest for ever. See on this subject Cartwright's Confut. of the Rhemists on Acts 14: 22, p. 292. See also Whately on Romish Errors, and in many other places.

[2] Do. do.

[3] See Presbytery and Prelacy, pp. 37, 109, 110, and Coleman's Primitive Church, p. 20.

the teaching presbyters or bishops.[1] The capacity to teach and to rule belongs to ALL PRESBYTERS, and is, we think, attributed to all in this passage. And the emphasis and distinction implied in the word "*especially*," must refer not to any distinction of order or office, but of appointment and labor. Those presbyters —whose function it is to teach and to rule—who at the sacrifice of all ease and comfort, and in the face of danger and death, go forth among the heathen around, and there "*labor*" and toil in preaching to such hardened and blaspheming enemies "the word and doctrine," THESE, says the apostle, are "worthy of even double honor."

The sense here given of the verb translated "labor" has been already noticed, and is referred to in a passage of the Apostolical Constitutions,[2] where it is taught that "to presbyters also, when they labor assiduously in the word and doctrines, let a double portion be assigned." It is here unquestionably made the duty of all the presbyters to preach, but it is to that kind of ministerial effort denominated *laboring*, that double honor is to be given.[3] "In no part, whatever, of the New Testament," says Mosheim,[4] "is the verb *labor* made use of, either absolutely or conjoined with the words *in word and doctrine*, to express the ordinary labor of teaching, and instructing the people. But I observe that St. Paul, in various places, applies this verb, and also the noun, sometimes separately, and at other times connected with certain other words, in an especial sense, to that kind of labor which he and other holy persons

[1] See Presbytery and Prelacy, B. I. ch. vi.

[2] Lib. ii. ch. xxviii.

[3] There are various allusions in this very section to the fact that presbyters were to preach, and also "to offer the eucharist."

[4] Commentary on the Affairs of the Christians, &c. vol. i. pp. 216, 217. See also Goode's Divine Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 62. Riddle's Christian Antiquities, B. iii. ch. iv. § 2, pp. 231, 232, 233. See also 231. Lightfoot's Works, vol. iii. pp. 258, 259. Voetius' Politicæ Eccles. tom. iii. p. 439, &c. Neander's Hist. of the Planting of Christianity, vol. i. pp. 174, 178. Also, Hist. of the Chr. Rel. vol. i. pp. 189–191, "Presbyters for ruling well, are worthy of double honor, specially for laboring in the word." See also this view of the passage urged at length by Macknight, Comm. in loco. vol. iii. pp. 206, 207. See also Neander's Hist. of the First Planting of Christianity, vol. i. p. 177.

encountered in propagating the light of the gospel and bringing over the Jews and heathens to a faith in Christ. In Romans 16: 12, (to pass over what is said in ver. 6 of one Mary,) the apostle describes Tryphæna and Tryphosa as laboring in the Lord; and Persis, another woman, as having labored much in the Lord, or which is the same thing, for the sake of, or in the cause of the Lord. Now what interpretation can be given to this, unless it be that these women had assiduously employed themselves in adding to the Lord's flock, and in initiating persons of their own sex in the principles of Christianity? The word appears to me to have the same sense in 1 Cor. 4: 12, where St. Paul says of himself, "And we *labor*, working with our own hands." By laboring, I here understand him to have meant laboring in the Lord or for Christ; and the sense of the passage appears to me to be, "Although we labor for Christ, and devote our life to the spreading the light of his gospel amongst mankind, we yet derive therefrom no worldly gain, but procure whatever may be necessary to our existence by the diligence of our hands." And when in the same epistle, 1 Cor. 15: 10, he declares himself to have "*labored* more abundantly than all the rest of the apostles," his meaning unquestionably is that he made more converts to Christianity than they. It would be easy to adduce other passages in which by laboring, whether it occur absolutely or in connexion with some explanatory addition, is evidently meant not the ordinary instruction of the Christians, but the propagating of the gospel among those who were as yet ignorant of the true religion; but I conceive that the citations which I have already made will be deemed sufficient. We see, therefore, that it might not, without show of reason and authority, be contended that by "the presbyters who labor in the word and doctrine," are to be understood such of the presbyters as were intent on enlarging the church, and occupied themselves in converting the Jews and heathens from their errors and bringing them into the fold of their Divine Master—and not those whose exertions were limited to the instructing and admonishing of the members of the church, when assembled for the purpose of divine worship. And nothing could be more natural than for such to be pointed out as more especially deserving of a higher reward, and worthy to be held in greater esteem than the rest.

The practice of the churches in subsequent times further expounds this text; for having few learned and able speakers, he that could preach best preached ordinarily, and was made chief, or bishop, or president, while the rest assisted him in government and other offices, and taught the people more privately, being however regarded as of the same office and order with him, and preaching occasionally as necessity or usefulness required.[1] It is true that when the prelates came to engross the power and authority of the ministry, they claimed the exclusive right to preach, while presbyters were only allowed to preach *by their permission;* and Dr. Miller deduces from this an argument in favor of the application of the term *presbyter* to lay or ruling elders; but that this was a tyrannical assumption of unconstitutional power, and neither the general rule nor the general custom, cannot be doubted.[2] "Unto priests as well as unto bishops is committed the dispensation of God's mysteries, for they are set over the church of God, and are partakers with bishops in the teaching of the people and the office of preaching," says one ancient council. "It is a very bad custom," says the Council of Constantinople, "in certain churches for priests to hold their peace in the presence of the bishops, as though they did either envy or scorn to hear them contrary to the apostle," etc. Gregory thus speaks in his pastorals: "Predications officium suscipit, quis ad sacerdotium accedit," whosoever taketh priesthood upon him, taketh upon him also the office of preaching. "Seeing to you," says Gregory of Nyssa, "and to such as you, adorned with hoary wisdom from above, and who are presbyters indeed, and justly styled the fathers of the church, the word of God conducts us to learn the doctrines of salvation, saying, ask thy father and he will show thee; thy presbyters, and they will tell thee." And so also, the first council of Aquisgranense, A. D. 816, most explicitly attributes to presbyters the function of preaching, and of administering the sacraments. It was in fact the general doctrine of all the fathers, that the words addressed by Christ to Peter, "feed my sheep,"

[1] Baxter on Episcopacy, Pt. II., p. 122. Apost. Fathers, ed. Cotel. Tom. i. p. 624.

[2] Vitringa shows that the custom of the African Church was an exception, p. 489. De Vet. Synag.

were addressed to all the ministers of Christ; and thus Suicer, in entering upon his illustration of the term presbyter from the Greek fathers, defines presbyters as those to whom is committed the word of God, or the preaching of the gospel.[1] Such is the clear determination of the fathers and of those who have most thoroughly studied their works. "The business of preaching," says the learned Le Moyne, "belonged to the apostles, bishops, and the early presbyters"—and this he confirms by a long series of witnesses.[2] Vitringa defends the same opinion,[3] and says, "Surely nothing can be more certain, nothing in ancient history more plainly brought to light," than that presbyters were capable of all the offices of the bishop or pastor, of which he makes an enumeration.[4] Yea, verily, even as late as the time of Jerome, "What could a bishop do which a presbyter could not do, except in the matter of ordination?"[5] in which custom and usurpation had given a precedency to the latter.

We have now then, we think, made it evident that in the primitive church, presbyters were, by their very office, preachers;[6] and that there was as a general rule a plurality of them in every church, just as was the case in the apostolic churches. The presumption, therefore, arising from these facts in favor of the interpretation now given to the passage in 1 Tim. 5: 17, is exceedingly strong, and this presumption will be greatly increased by the additional fact that in the fathers, the very term προεστωτες, here translated *ruling*, and now imagined to refer to our *ruling elders*, or lay representatives of the people, is employed to denote (as we think it does in *this* passage) the president, moderator, or superintendent of the presbytery, who was preëminently the pastor and preacher of the church.[7] In proof of this, we request attention to the following examples:

Polycarp, in his letter to Valens, recognizes the authority of the presbyters over him, their co-presbyter, and represents him

[1] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 126.

[2] Not. ad Polycarpi Epist. p. 35, in Vitringa, p. 497.

[3] See pp. 484, 485.

[4] See p. 486, and especially p. 489.

[5] Ep. ad Evagr. l. c.

[6] See further proof in Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 157, &c. and 164, &c.

[7] These terms are all synonymous in their derivation.

as having been "made a presbyter among *them*."[1] Clemens speaks of "the presbyters appointed over" the church at Corinth, as having the gifts, *επισκοπης*, or the episcopacy.[2]

Thus Justin Martyr mentions the *προεστως των αδελφων*, who was a presbyter, who presided, and offered up the eucharistic prayers. He calls him "that one of the brethren who presides."[3] Irenæus, in describing the succession of bishops, calls them "presbyters, presiding among their brethren." Such were Soter, Victor, and others, who are now glorified into popes, but who, in the days of Irenæus, were only *πρεσβυτεροι οι προισταντες*, presiding or ruling presbyters.[4] Clement of Alexandria, places the honor of bishops in their having the *first seat* in the presbytery, that is, among the other presbyters, *πρωτοκαθεδρια*.[5] Tertullian also represents the government of the church as resident in the council of presbyters, *ecclesiastici ordinis consessus*, of which the bishop was the *antistes*, *præsidens*, or *summus sacerdos*. "The presidents that bear rule, are," says he, "certain approved presbyters."[6] Even Ignatius describes the bishop as the officer of an individual church, and as occupying the first seat, *προκαθημενου*. The apostolical tradition ascribed to Hippolytus, represents the bishop or moderator asking the presbytery of the church over which a pastor was to be set apart, "whom they desire for a president?" *ον αιτουνται εις αρχοντα*. The setting apart of the presiding bishop, or presbyter, was, by "the deacons holding the divine gospels over his head," while presbyters were ordained by imposition of hands; nor is there any proof that the prelates, or presiding bishops, were separately ordained by imposition of hands, before the third century.[7]

Basil speaks of the *προεστωτες* or rulers of Christ's flock.[8] Gregory, of Nyssa, calls bishops the spiritual *προεστωτες* or rulers.[9] Both Theodoret and Theophylact explain the term as referring to those who preach, and administer the sacraments, and

[1] Dr. Wilson's Prim. Gov't, p. 227. [2] Ibid.
[3] Apol. ad Anton. Sect. I. c. 67. [4] Dr. Wilson's Prim. Gov't, p. 227.
[5] Ibid. p. 228. [6] See in Archb. Usher's Reduction of Episc.
[7] Dr. Wilson's Prim. Gov't, p. 229.
[8] In Ps. 28. In Suiceri Thes. in voce. [9] In Ibid.

preside over spiritual affairs.[1] Chrysostom is of the same opinion.[2] Isidore, of Pelusium, in the fifth century, uses the words *προεστως, επισκοπος, ιερευς*, promiscuously, for the same office.[3] Augustine testifies to the same thing; "for what is a bishop," says he, "but a primus presbyter, that is, a high priest, (who was in order only a priest,) and he (that is, the apostle) calls them no otherwise than his co-presbyters and co-priests."[4] In like manner does he employ the term *sacerdos*, priest, as synonymous with *episcopus*, bishop, occasionally prefixing the epithet *summus*, or chief, and thus regarding the bishop as no more than the *primus*, presiding or ruling presbyter.[5] Cyprian is strong in confirmation of the same position. While he employs "the office of a priesthood," and "the degree of a bishop," as synonymous,[6] his great argument, upon which he frequently dwells for the superior honor of bishops, is founded upon the preëminence of Peter over the other apostles. But he himself teaches, and the fathers generally taught, that Peter was only *primus inter pares*, and that all the apostles were one in order, and equal in power. And, therefore, he must have believed that bishops were greater in honor than other presbyters, only because elevated to the situation of presidency.[7] He thought Peter was ordinarily præses, or moderator, in the apostolic presbytery, and that bishops stood in the same relation to their presbyters. Cyprian, in fact, was nothing more nor less than moderator of his eight presbyters, without whom he could do nothing.[8] Such was also the case with Cornelius bishop of Rome.[9] Sozomen, the ecclesiastical historian, is also found using the terms *επισκοπος, προεστως, ηγουμενος*, and *προστατης*, as convertible

[1] In Ps. 28. In Suiceri Thes. in voce, and p. 194.

[2] On 1 Tim. 5: 17, and Dr. Wilson's Prim. Gov't, p. 158.

[3] See Dr. Wilson's Prim. Ch. p. 160.

[4] Tom. iv. 780, in Dr. Wilson, p. 182.

[5] Ibid. [6] Jameson's Cyp. Isot. pp. 395, 362, and c. 393.

[7] See this position abundantly proved by Prof. Jameson, in his Cyprianus Isotimus, pp. 374, 375, 377, 380, 390, 391.

[8] See Epistles, 8, 9, 20, 30, 35, 36, 48, 59, and Jameson, p. 448.

[9] In Epistle 49, ibid. To this agrees the testimony of Usher, in his Reduction of Episc., who thus interpreted them. That there were many officers in the same church, see Jameson, pp, 462–464.

terms, and thus preserving the original idea of the bishop, as the presiding presbyter.[1] Hilary, under the names of Ambrose and others, calls the bishop *primus presbyter*.[2] Optatus calls him *primicerius*, which, as a learned civilian defines it, means πρωτον της ταξεως, the first of his order,[3] and consequently, still a presbyter. The presbyter is thus described by Gregory Nazianzen, as the second bishop, εν δευτεροις θρονοις. Just as the prætor Urbanus was called maximus, while yet he had no more power than the others, but only a greater dignity; and as the chief archon at Athens was only one among many, *pares potestate*, so presbyters and bishops had *idem ministerium*, as Jerome attests, and *eadem ordinatio*, as Hilary declares; that is, the same ministry, orders, ordination, and power, although the bishop had the first place in official dignity.

To these testimonies may be added that of the fourth council of Carthage. "Let the bishop, when he is in the church, and sitting in the presbytery, be placed in a higher seat; but when he is in the manse, or house, let him acknowledge that he is but their colleague;"[4] that is, says Chamier, "in the same charge and office."[5]

It was doubtless in reference to this primitive custom of presidency, that the ancients speak of Peter as bishop of Antioch and Rome; James, of Jerusalem; Timothy, of Ephesus; Titus, of Crete; and Mark, of Alexandria; because they were much at those places, and frequently presided in the churches there. And hence, too, the doctrine of apostolical succession, which was nothing more than a list of those who presided over different churches.[6]

Prelates were originally nothing more than the *presiding presbyters* of the churches. Hence, we have found among the ancients generally, that while in Greek they were denominated

[1] See quoted in tom. iv. in Dr. Wilson, p. 191.
[2] In 1 Tim. Autor. Quest. in V. et N. T. in Baxter's Diocesan Ch. p. 112.
[3] Gothofrid in Code, in ibid.
[4] Caranz. Summ. Concil. Can. § 5. In Jameson's Cyp. p. 441.
[5] Tom. ii. lib. xiv. c. 14, N. 12, in ibid. p..442.
[6] Benson's Essay on the Relig. Worship of the Christians, ch. vii. § 6.

προϊσταμενοι, in Latin they were called *præpositi* (hence provost);[1] and while in Greek they were called πρωεδροι, that is, entitled to the first seat, in Latin they were called *præsides* and *præsidentes*, presidents;[2] and hence, too, in order to distinguish them from the other presbyters, who were still called bishops, they were, as Theodoret says, denominated *apostles*.[3] The original parity of the ministry, the identity of presbyters and bishops, and the derivation of prelates from this original order of presiding presbyters, or moderators, are thus found to be deeply imbedded in the whole nomenclature of the prelacy itself, in every age of the church.

From what has been said, therefore, we conclude that the passage in 1 Tim. 5 : 17, does not refer to a double order of elders, but to the peculiar duties to which in the apostolic and primitive churches, presbyters, the same order, were assigned—the term *ruling* referring to the duty assigned to those who were set over the local church, and who presided over the meetings of the presbytery; and the word *especially* referring to the peculiarly self-denying and laborious duties to which THEY were called who performed the work of evangelists in the surrounding country. Or, if this interpretation seems too conjectural, there is still another which is easy and natural, and accordant to the facts in the case. It will be shown from Cyprian that the distinction so generally recognized by the reformers and in our own mother church, between pastors and doctors, was acted upon in the primitive church. Both were presbyters, but while the one discharged fully all the functions of the pastor, the other labored in preparing the catechumens for admission into the church, in giving instruction also to candidates for the ministry, and to all others also when schools were established by the apostles, as is asserted, and by the earliest Christians, as is undoubted. And of this distinction there are clear proofs remaining. The double reference, therefore, in this passage, may be to *this* double class of duties, the presidency of a congregation

[1] See authorities in Riddle's Ch. Antiq. p. 161. Coleman's ibid. p. 98. Bingham, vol. i. p. 53, &c.

[2] Riddle's Ant. p. 162. Bingham, &c.

[3] Riddle, ibid. p. 162.

where other ministers were associated, being an office more of honor than of toilsome labor, and for which a man of advanced years, who was not adapted to the active duties of the latter sphere, might be competent.

Either interpretation will meet the difficulties of the case; and if the word rendered "honor" mean, as is supposed, *compensation*, it will still more effectually exclude the ruling elder, whose office has never been salaried.[1]

There is, then, no warrant in Scripture, or in the constitution of the apostolic or of the early churches, for interpreting the term *presbyter* in the New Testament as having reference to the representatives of the people, that is, to our present ruling elders. It must, therefore, be regarded as appropriated to the bishops or teachers of the churches. And just as we have now presidents or moderators of our presbyteries, chosen from among the presbyters, so were there in the apostolic churches presidents, who were distinguished from the others by being called "presiding presbyters." And as these were originally chosen for life, they gradually came, by way of abbreviation, to be called "THE BISHOPS," to distinguish them, until, in process of time, this title was appropriated exclusively to them, while that of presbyters alone was given to the others.[2] This text, then, and it is the only one which gives any ground for two kinds of presbyters,[3] can-

[1] See this view ably sustained by Vitringa, p. 490, &c.

[2] On the importance of this view in explaining the origin of Prelacy, and other difficulties, see Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 162, &c., and p. 295, &c.

[3] Should any allege in proof of the passage in 1 Tim. 4: 14, we would reply in the words of Mr. Lazarus Seaman, in his Vindication of the Ordination of the Reformers, p. 92, "Though the power of ordaining or confirming pastors (say they) belong to the whole presbytery, yet of old the presbytery did execute that in the rite of laying on of hands, not so much by ruling elders as by pastors, who did especially attend on prophecy or explication of the scripture, and application of it to the use of the faithful. Unde Prophetia cum Manuum impositione per quam olim fiebat Ordinatio Pastorum ab Apostolo conjunctur. 1 Tim. 4: 14. By this it appears they have a singular opinion of the word prophecy, not of the word presbytery; for they plainly supposed the presbytery consisted of two sorts of elders, and yet that preaching elders only laid on hands. And well they might suppose that, (as doth your author so often cited,

not, to use the words of Dr. Wilson,[1] establish such distinction, because it can be literally understood of the various duties of the same order. Presbyters advanced in life, grave in deportment, and of distinguished prudence, were fitted to preside; others, if of more ready utterance, and of competent knowledge, were best qualified to teach. The passage shows that some *presided*, that others *labored* in word, and that the honor, or rather *reward* was to be proportioned to their efforts, and not according to grades and orders never mentioned in the Scriptures. Presbyter, as an officer of a church, means, in every other passage in the New Testament, a bishop, in the ancient sense of the term; and there is no reason to infer from this text, a new sort, never heard of till the Reformation. If there is any priority, it is a precedence over the presbyters themselves; for the προεστως was he who *presided* amongst the Ephori, among whom was parity; or who governed a kingdom, and, accordingly, Chrysostom thought him both ποιμην and διδασκαλος, *a pastor and teacher.* So far is the word *ruling* (προεστωτες) from signifying a subordinate class of presbyters, that Justin Martyr, within half a century of John, makes use of that identical word repeatedly, to mark out that presbyter, who gave thanks and dispensed the elements at the sacramental supper to the deacons, to be carried to the communicants. The presbyters, who presided (προεστωτες) on the most solemn occasions, blessing the elements, deserved double reward; but *especially those* (μαλιστα οι) who performed the chief labor in preaching. "All the saints salute you, (μαλιστα δε οι,) *but chiefly they* that are of Cæsar's household." (Phil. 4. 22.) Who would imagine that the saints of Cæsar's house-

p. 171,) because much of prayer and teaching is to accompany the act of imposition, before and after. None affirm that the word presbytery, as it is used in 1 Tim. 4: 14, does necessarily imply a company of ruling elders, as well as others. But upon the supposition that there are two sorts of elders, proved by other places, they may be included under that one word, because it is comprehensive of them both."

[1] On the Government of the Churches, pp. 283, 284. We might quote at great length in further confirmation, Vitringa de Syn. Vet. See pp. 479–484, 490, 879, 883.

hold were of a different kind from others? Their labors might be different, but they were equally saints; the word *especially* only *expresses* that their salutations were either *more* earnest, or presented to *peculiar* notice.[1]

[1] See also Coleman's Primitive Church, p. 127.

CHAPTER III.

The term Presbyter was applied by the Fathers only to Ministers who preached and ordained, and not to Ruling Elders.

We now come to the Fathers, and inquire whether among them the office of ruling elders existed, and if so whether they denominated such officers by the term *presbyters?* On the first inquiry it is not our purpose to dwell, as it has been already sufficiently established by many writers, and is clearly implied in all the proofs by which the participation of the laity in the government of the church is so undeniably proved.[1] The only question, therefore, to which we advert, is, in what way the representatives of the laity who sat in all the early councils, and took part in all the concerns of the church, were described, and whether they are ever to be understood by the term *presbyter.*

In the writings of THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS we seem to have the simple delineations of church polity which are given in the New Testament, except in the epistles of Ignatius, which there is very little reason to doubt, have been made to assume the coloring of a subsequent age.[2] We read in Clemens Romanus of no other officers in the church than "bishops and deacons," for while he does employ the term *presbyters*, he identifies the persons so named with those whom he calls bishops, since he supposes the presbyters to have been invested with the episcopal office, and blames the church of Corinth for having cast them out of their bishoprics, that is, out of their episcopal office.[3] Either, therefore, there were no officers corresponding to ruling elders

[1] See note B. [2] See this proved in Presbytery and Prelacy.

[3] See Ep. § 44, 47, and 57. See the author's work on Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 340, &c.

in the church at Corinth in the time of Clemens, the people conducting their affairs as a body, or otherwise the bishops and other presbyters, together with the deacons, were intrusted with the oversight of the congregation. Clemens, it is true, speaks of a plurality of these presbyter-bishops in the Corinthian church, but this, we have seen, is in exact accordance with apostolic usage.

Very similar is the letter of Polycarp, who was probably the *προεστως*, or presiding presbyter "in the church at Smyrna," for Irenæus calls him "the apostolic presbyter," and also "bishop." This epistle begins very similarly to the epistle to the Philippians, (ch. 1 : 1,) or to the address of the apostle Peter to his fellow presbyters, (1 Peter 5 : 1, &c.) "Polycarp and his fellow-presbyters," or "the presbyters united with him," and living with him at Smyrna, "to the church of God at Philippi." Now that by presbyters he meant *ministers*, is plain from its application to Valens their former minister and bishop, who was, he says, "made a presbyter;" and from the fact that as the apostle spoke only of bishops and deacons in their church, (Phil. 1 : 1,) so Polycarp alludes only to presbyters and deacons. He must, therefore, mean by presbyters the bishops of the apostle. And he does, as we have seen, actually employ these terms as interchangeable and synonymous.[1]

It will appear from a comparison of the passages in the writings of Hermas, which bear on this subject, that he considered *bishops* and *elders* as different titles for the same office. He speaks of *elders* as *presiding over the church of Rome;* he represents a *plurality of elders* as having this *presidency* at the same time; having used the word *bishops*, he explains it as meaning those *who presided over the churches;* and immediately after *bishops*, (without mentioning *presbyters*,) he proceeds to speak of *deacons*, that is, those who are intrusted with *the protection of the poor and of the widows*.

As to one other passage, in which he uses four terms in describing the officers of the church, it must either be interpreted in accordance with the preceding one, the terms bishop, doctor,

[1] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 347.

and minister, as in Scripture, being applicable to the one general order of Christian ministers, whom Hermas had denominated presbyters, and who are here made to succeed the apostles; or, if it must be taken literally, then it recommends four orders of the ministry, and not three, and these, too, such as no man on earth can find or distinguish. It is apparent, that to all these officers, Hermas attributes the management of the episcopal office, and the power of the keys, and therefore they must all possess the same powers and functions. He makes no distinction whatever between the rulers and the teachers, but identifies their office. And hence we must conclude, that in the time of Hermas, presbyters were equally called apostles, that is, their successors in the ordinary ministry of the word, bishops, doctors, and ministers, and that no other officers were known to the churches, except deacons, who attended to the wants of the poor. These presbyters, or bishops, it is further evident, constituted a college who governed in common the church of some single city or parish,—"the presbyters in this city who govern the church."[1]

In Ignatius we have a very frequent reference to the bishops, presbyters, and deacons, but there is nothing whatever to militate against the view of these terms already given. We must, therefore, conclude, that he uses these words in their scriptural sense, and as they were employed by Clemens, Polycarp, and Hermas; and that he meant therefore by bishop, the president, or προεστως, of which bishop is a literal rendering, and fully expresses its meaning. To give to the term bishop any other meaning, as prelatists do, is most intolerable presumption, and a plain contradiction to the inspired testimony. That the presbyters of Ignatius were preachers, and not merely rulers or representatives, is, we think, evident from the manner in which they are spoken of. He calls on the people to submit "to the presbytery as to the law of Christ," and "to the presbyters as presiding in the place of the apostolical senate." He calls them "those who preside among you as the type or example, and the source of instruction in incorruptible truth."[2] "Be subject to

[1] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 346.

[2] Epist. ed Magnes, § 6.

the presbyters as to the apostles of Jesus Christ our hope."[1] In the epistle to Hiero, ascribed to Ignatius, he says of presbyters, "they baptize, they celebrate the eucharist, they impose hands in penance, they ordain."[2]

Of THE PRIMITIVE FATHERS, the first of whom we have any record is Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, in Asia, A. D. 116. Of his exposition of the oracles of God only a few fragments remain. And of these the only passage bearing on the question before us, is perhaps the one preserved by Eusebius, which is as follows: "I shall not think it grievous to set down in writing, with my interpretations, the things which I have learned of the presbyters, and remember as yet very well, being fully certified of their truth. If I met any where with one who had conversed with the presbyters, I inquired after the sayings of the presbyters; what Andrew, what Peter, what Philip, what Thomas or James had said; what John, or Matthew, or any other disciples of the Lord were wont to say; and what Ariston, or John the presbyter said: for I am of the mind that I could not profit so much by reading books, as by attending to those who spake with the living voice." It is very evident from this extract, that, in the estimation of this primitive father, the presbyterate was the highest order in the ministry, and the true succession of the apostles, in their ordinary ministry, since he speaks only of presbyters, and expressly calls the apostles themselves presbyters.[3]

Justin Martyr denominates the pastor or officiating minister of the Christian church, the προεστως, president or moderator. This word he uses, instead of *minister* or *bishop*, six times, and these other terms not at all.

According to Justin Martyr, therefore, the bishop, who was the pastor of a single congregation, and therefore, by no possibility a prelate, was also a presbyter. As such he offered up prayers, and gave thanks, in the church; administered the

[1] Ep. ad Fall. § 2, and § 3, and Ep. ad Smyrn. § 8. See his testimony fully considered in Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 349, &c.

[2] Cap. iii. ed. Cotel Thorndike, pp. 163, 164.

[3] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 366, &c.

Lord's Supper; delivered discourses; and generally conducted the worship of the congregation, in all which duties we have described to us the office of a pastor, but not that of a prelate, or of a ruling elder. Justin employs the very term, so commonly applied to presbyters throughout the New Testament, calling his bishop the προεστως, the presbyter who presided, the moderator, or *primus inter pares*.[1]

About this very period, Philo, in describing the order of the synagogue, says: "They brought him (i. e. the accused) before the president, with whom the priests sat in council;"[2] and this term, president, is, says Vitringa, commonly appropriated by the Rabbis to the bishop or preacher of the congregation.[3]

That Irenæus also employs the term presbyter, as the title of those who preached and administered sacraments, is plain. In the letter addressed by the martyrs to Eleutherius, they commend to him Irenæus, "as a presbyter of the church, which degree he had obtained."

"We ought,"[4] says Irenæus himself, "to obey those *presbyters* who are in the church; those, I mean, *who have succession from the apostles*, as we have shown, who with the succession of THE EPISCOPATE, have received, according to the good pleasure of the Father, the sure gift of truth. But they who are looked upon by many as *presbyters*, but serve their own pleasures, ... and are elated with pride, at *their exaltation to the chief seat*, . . . shall be reproved by the Word. . . . From all such it behoves us to stand aloof, and to cleave to those who, *as I have said before*, both retain the doctrine of the apostles, and, with THE ORDER OF THEIR PRESBYTERSHIP, (or as Fevardentius reads, *of a presbyter*,) exhibit soundness in word, and a blameless conversation." Having described wicked presbyters, he adds,[5] "from such we ought to depart, but to adhere to those who keep the doctrine of the apostles; and with the order of presbytery, maintain sound doctrine, and a blameless

[1] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 367.
[2] See Life of Moses, lib. lii. p. 528, in Vitringa.
[3] See Vitringa, lib. i. ch. vi. and Bernard, pp. 55, 56.
[4] Adv. Hæres, l. iv. c. 43. [5] Ibid. l. iv. c. 44.

conversation, &c. Such presbyters the church does not nourish, concerning whom the prophet also saith, I will give thee princes in peace, and bishops in righteousness. Of whom our Lord also said, Who, therefore, is that faithful, and good, and wise servant, whom his master may set over his house, to give them their food in due season?" Again, "He, that is, the apostle, attributes to all teachers, that succession of the church that is from the apostles; and then relates what doctrine he had received from a certain presbyter, that had received it from such as saw and conversed with the apostles." Writing to Florinus, he says, "These opinions, O Florinus, the presbyters before our times, the disciples (or first successors) of the apostles, did by no means deliver to thee."[1] After alluding to Polycarp, and to his instructions and discourses, he adds, "I can testify before God, that if that holy and apostolic presbyter (Polycarp) had heard only such a thing, he would instantly have reclaimed and stopt his ears." Writing to Victor, then bishop of Rome, on the subject of the Easter controversy, he reminds him, that "he ought to follow the ancient custom of the presbyters, whom he had succeeded," alluding to Anicetus, Pius, Hyginus, Telesphorus, and Xystus, whom he had just named, and whom he calls presbyters.[2]

Victor, bishop of Rome, A. D. 192, thus writes: "As thy holy fraternity were taught by those presbyters, who had seen the apostles in the flesh, and governed the church, until thy time, (we find) the catholic church celebrate pasch, not on the fourteenth of the month, with the Jews, but from the fifteenth day to the twenty-first. Therefore let thy fraternity write to the presbyters of Gaul, that they observe pasch, not as the Jews, who deny Christ, but with the followers of the apostles, and preachers of the truth. The college of the brethren salute thee: salute the brethren who are with thee in the Lord. Eubulus, one of our college, who carries this epistle to Vienna, is ready to live and die with thee." This epistle was sent by Victor and his colleagues, to Dionysius, bishop of Vienna; and from this passage,

[1] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. v. c. 39.

[2] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 370, &c.

it is evident to a demonstration that presbyters were the successors of the apostles, and that by the term presbyter, therefore, only the ministers or teachers of the church were understood.[1]

Clement Alexandrinus confirms this conclusion. That he identifies bishops and presbyters, as the same general ministerial order, would appear to be incontrovertible. In the very paragraph in which he makes an enumeration of officers, and in allusion to the heavenly progression, he ranks them under the two denominations of presbyters and deacons,[2] while in another passage, he places presbyters first, and bishops second, and widows fourth. Though only a presbyter, he yet styles himself a governor of the church. He ranks himself among the shepherds or pastors. He speaks of presbyters imposing hands, and giving their blessing. Presbyters, according to Clement, were intrusted with a dignified ministry. He expressly identifies bishop and presbyter, by using the one term for the other, in the passage in 1 Tim. 5 : 14. Presbyters, according to him, occupy the chief seat on earth, and shall sit down among the four and twenty thrones in heaven. He repeatedly enumerates only presbyters and deacons, as the ministering officers of the church. The presbyter, with Clement Alexandrinus, was the highest order of the ministry, and occupied the chief seat, being clothed with the chief dignity in the church, and was therefore the true and proper successor of the apostles."[3]

Tertullian describes the presbyters as presiding among the churches, administering the communion and baptizing. His presidents or presbyters, therefore, cannot possibly refer to *ruling elders*, who never have been so called, or supposed to be capable of any of those functions. Preachers, therefore, must be the presidents of Tertullian, that is, the presiding presbyters of the apostles, who received this office, says Tertullian, "not by money, but by the suffrages of their brethren."

[1] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 372. [2] See Ibid. p. 373.

[3] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 374. "In his tract entitled, 'Quis dives salvetur,'" says the Bishop of Lincoln in his account of his writings, "the titles bishop and presbyter are indifferently applied to the same person. . . . . The bishop was, therefore, in truth, the chief presbyter." Lond. 1835, p. 464.

Origen says, "we of the clerical order, who preside over you;" and in speaking of the angels in the Apocalypse, he says, "that certain ruling presbyters in the churches were called angels." Bishops and presbyters, with Origen, were the *same order; they* RULED the church, *in common*, the PRESBYTERS PRESIDING, with the BISHOP, he having a *higher chair*, and being *distinguished* by the *name* of *bishop*.[1] Origen does unquestionably allude to a class of officers similar to our ruling elders, but not under the title of presbyters. "There are," he says,[2] "some *rulers* appointed, whose duty it is to inquire concerning the manners and conversation of those who are admitted, that they may debar from the congregation such as commit filthiness."

Cyprian unquestionably employs the term presbyter to designate those who were appointed to preach, administer the sacraments, and with the bishop or president to govern the church. He appears to have had no officer corresponding to the ruling elder in his church, but to have referred all matters to the judgment of the people at large, as may be seen from several passages in his epistles.[3] Such is the opinion of Professor Jameson, in his very able work on the Cyprianic polity of the church. He here abandons the position he had taken in his former works respecting the ruling elder, and gives it as his ultimate opinion that "those elders are the representatives of the sacred Plebs, or of the church, as she is opposed unto, or distinguished from church officers, properly so called, bishops or pastors, and deacons; therefore that they are not, in a strict sense, church officers. For I am so well assured of this truth, that only bishops, or presbyters and deacons, are, in a proper and strict sense, church officers, that if any thing I ever said can be proved to contradict this, I willingly revoke and retract it."

Again, he says, "I cannot, indeed, during the first three centuries, find express mention of these seniors or ruling elders: for I freely pass from some words of Tertullian and Origen, which I elsewhere overly mentioned, as containing them; as also

[1] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 378.

[2] See Contra Colsum, lib. iii. p. 142, in Dr. Miller on the Eldership.

[3] See Ep. 6th, and Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 380, &c., and Jameson's Cyprianus Isotinus.

from what I said of the Ingnatian presbyters, their being ruling or non-preaching elders, and that without giving of much advantage to the Diocesanists, since in or about the Cyprianic age, in which time, as I judge, the author or interpolator wrote, there were belonging to the same church, parish, or congregation, divers presbyters, who preached little, if any; and yet had power to dispense the word and sacraments." There is a passage indeed adduced by Dr. Miller, which seems to favor the distinct application of the term presbyter to those that did not preach. It is in his twenty-ninth Epistle, in which as he translates the words, Cyprian speaks of "*teaching presbyters.*"[1] The words in the original are "cum presbyteris doctoribus." Now were *doctoribus* an adjective, qualifying *presbyteris*, persons authorized to teach, the word would have been *docentibus*, and not *doctoribus*. That there were then a class of teaching presbyters called *doctors*, is evident from the same epistle, where it is said that Optatus was appointed *doctorem audientium*, that is, a teacher of the catechumens, who were in a state of preparation for admission to the church. The words, therefore, are to be rendered, "with the presbyters and doctors,"[2] or, "with those presbyters who are doctors." Our reformers generally recognized this distinction, which was practically carried out in Scotland, and adopted in its standards, and in the Form of Government adopted by the Westminster Assembly.[3] The Doctors, as distinct from the other presbyters or teachers, appear to have continued longer in the African than in the other churches, and are spoken of by Origen.[4]

The testimony of Firmilian is very much to our purpose, and in the teeth of those who claim for ruling elders the power of ordination. He says, "All power and grace are placed in the church, where *presbyters* presided, in whom is vested the power of baptizing, and imposition of hands, and *ordination.*"[5]

[1] Such is the rendering of Marshall. See his Works of Cyprian, p. 69.

[2] So it is rendered in the recent Translation issued at Oxford in 1844, p. 61.

[3] See the First and Second Books of Discipline, and the Form referred to, as it is still in force in the Church of Scotland.

[4] See this view of the passage coufirmed with great learning by Vitringa de Synag. pp. 494–497, which I read subsequently.

[5] Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 383.

In the Gesta Purgationis, commonly referred to the fourth century, we meet with the following enumeration of church officers: "Presbyteri, diaconi et seniores," that is first, and as the highest order, *the presbyters;* next, *the deacons;* and then, *the seniors*, or representatives of the people; who are thus carefully distinguished from the presbyters; and also, in the following words, from the clergy generally: "Call the fellow-clergymen, AND *the seniors of the people (seniores plebis), ecclesiastical men.*" In the assembly of which they give an account, several letters were read, addressed "*to the clergy* AND *the seniors.*[1] These ecclesiastical officers are also alluded to by Optatus, under the same title of "seniors."[2]

Hilary identifies bishops and presbyters, and thus clearly proves that he regarded presbyters as ordained preachers and pastors. He at the same time alludes to a class of officers called *seniors*, and whom he distinguishes from the *teachers* or *presbyters*. "For indeed," says he, "among all nations, old age is honorable. Hence it is that the synagogue, and afterwards the church, had elders, without whose counsel nothing was done in the church; which by what negligence it grew into disuse I know not; unless perhaps by the sloth, or rather by the pride of the teachers, while they alone wished to appear something." He testifies also, that "in Egypt, even to this day, the presbyters ordain in the bishop's absence," and that "the ordination of bishop and presbyter is the same, for both are priests."[3]

Damasus, bishop of Rome, (A. D. 366,) says, "the primitive church only had these two sacred orders of presbyters and deacons."[4]

Aerius, in A. D. 368, also identifies the presbyter and the bishop as the pastor and administrator of sacraments, and the minister also of ordination.[5]

Basil, in A. D. 370, in his Commentary on Isaiah 3 : 2, says,

[1] See in Dr. Miller on the Eldership, p. 68. English edition.
[2] See do. do. p. 70.
[3] See Prelacy and Presbytery, p. 213, and Dr. Miller on the Eldership, p. 71.
[4] See do. do. p. 391.
[5] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 391, and for all the authorities.

on the word presbyter, "Among the things that are threatened, is also the removal of the presbyter, seeing that the advantage of his presence is not small. A presbyter is he who is dignified with the first seat, and enrolled in the presbytery, bearing the character of a presbyter; especially, indeed, if he be an unmarried man, or if even, according to the law of the Lord, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, etc.; this is the presbyter whom the Lord will take away from a sinful people."[1]

Gregory Nazianzen, (A. D. 370,) in a description of the church at Byzantium, observes, "Behold the bench of presbyters, dignified by age and understanding; the regularity of the deacons, not far from the same spirit; the decency of the readers; the attention of the people, as well in the men as in the women, equal in virtue." Here are only presbyters, deacons, readers, and people, and yet, this church cannot be presumed to have been defective of any class of officers existing in other churches. Again, "As the presbyter is a minister, he is to preach; as he is a ruler, he is to make rules (or canons) for bishops and presbyters. And further, he ascends from being governed to be a governor; again, he is to feed the souls of men; to lead and conduct others in the way of truth; to act the joint priest with Christ; to build and rear up the world that is above; nay, and to be a head of the fulness of Christ."

Gregory Nyssene (A. D. 371) is equally explicit in appropriating the term presbyter to the pastor or minister. "Seeing to you," he says, "and to such as you, adorned with hoary wisdom from above, who are presbyters indeed, and justly styled the fathers of the church, the word of God conducts us to learn the doctrines of salvation, saying, (Deut. 32 : 7,) 'Ask thy Father, and he will show thee: thy presbyters, and they will tell thee.'"

Ambrose, of Milan, (A. D. 374,) tells us we are to understand by the word "angels" in the Apocalypse, the rectors or presidents, the προεστωτες, (or presiding presbyters,) because angel means messenger, and they who announce the word of God to the people are not improperly called angels.

[1] See in Sancti Basilii Opera. Paris. 1839. Tom. i. p. 636. The whole passage is in point.

Epiphanius says, "They say that he, (Aerius,) a Lybian by descent, having become a presbyter in Alexandria, *presided* (προιστατο) over a church called Baucalis. For as many churches as are of the catholic church, at Alexandria, are under one archbishop; and over these, individually, *presbyters* are placed, to administer to the ecclesiastical exigences of the neighboring inhabitants."

Augustine is very careful to distinguish the presbyters from the representatives of the people. Writing to his charge, he directs his epistle, Dilectissimis fratribus, clero senioribus et universæ plebi Ecclesiæ Hipponensis: where first there is the general compellation fratribus, "brethren," then there is a distribution of these brethren into the clergy, the elders, and the whole people; so that there were in that church *seniors*, distinguished both from the clergy and the rest of the people.

So again, *Contra cresconium Grammaticum: Omnes vos Episcopi, Presbyteri, Diaconi, et seniores scitis:* "All you bishops, elders, deacons, and seniors, do know." And again, cap. 56, *Peregrinus Presbyter, et seniores Ecclesiæ Musticanæ Regiones tale desiderium prosequentur;* where again we read of presbyter and seniors in one church.

These seniors had power to reprove offenders, otherwise why should Augustine say, "when they were by the seniors reproved for their errors, and drunkenness is laid to a man's charge, etc. So that it was proper to the seniors to have the cognizance of delinquents and to reprove them."

The same Augustine, in Psalm 36, says, "Being requested by letters from the seniors of that church, it was needful for me to hear the cause of Primian," etc.

The letter of Purpurius to Silvanus saith, *Adhibite conclericos, et seniores plebis, Ecclesiasticos Viros, et inquirant quæ sunt istæ Dissensiones: ut ea quæ sunt secundum fidei Præcepta fiant*— where we see the joint power of these seniors with the clergy in ordering ecclesiastical affairs; that by their wisdom and care peace might be settled in the church; for which cause these seniors are called ecclesiastical men; and yet they are distinguished from clergymen.

They are mentioned again afterwards by Maximus, saying,

Loquor nomine seniorum populi Christiani. Greg. Mag. distinguisheth them also from the clergy: *Tabellarium cum consensu seniorum et cleri memineris ordinandum.*

So again Optatus, who mentioning a persecution that did for a while scatter the church, saith, *Erant ecclesiæ ex auro et argento quam plurima ornamenta, quæ nec defodere terræ nec secum portare poterat, quare fidelibus senioribus commendavit.* Allaspineus, that learned antiquary, on this place acknowledges, that besides the clergy there were certain of the elders of the people, men of approved life, that did tend the affairs of the church, of whom this place is to be understood.[1]

But it is enough. The same uniform testimony will be found to be given by all the Fathers who write on this subject at all, as may be seen in my examination of their testimony, in another place,[2] and in the numerous proofs there given of the facts that ordination and imposition of hands were regarded in the early church, and by many later fathers, as the functions of presbyters who were identified with bishops, as the pastors and preachers of the church.[3] Any one who will consult Binius, will find that presbyters were the pastors of the churches, and might even ordain;[4] that he quotes the fourth Council of Carthage as decreeing that the seniors of the churches should be esteemed worthy of great honor,[5] that they were anciently called senatus pauper in the church of Rome[6]—that in Africa all the officers of the church, of whatever degree, who were associated with the bishop in the government of the church, were called his senate;[7] and that if these officers undertook to ordain, they were punished. Such also is the undoubted opinion of the schoolmen, who recognize only the two orders of prebsyters or bishops, and dea-

[1] See these passages in Smectymnuus, p. 74.

[2] Presbytery and Prelacy, pp. 397–408.

[3] See Presbytery and Prelacy, B. i. ch. x. pp. 212–234. Various additional authorities may be found in Martene de Antiq. Eccl. Ritibus. See Index, order *presbyter*, and the various volumes referred to.

[4] Binii Concilia Generalia, tom. iv. p. 558; vii. 731; i. 742, 415, 539, 734, 573, 400; ix. 406; vii. 731 and 887; iii. 835. See also Morinus de Sacr. Eccl. Ordinationibus, pt. iii. p. 276, § 5, &c.

[5] Tom. i. p. 730, Can. 83.

[6] Tom. i. p. 85.

[7] See tom. ix. Index "Seves."

cons;[1] of all the Oriental churches;[2] of many prelatists;[3] and of the universal church.[3] Nothing, therefore, can be more certain, as it appears to our minds, than the fact that THE TERM PRESBYTER (πρεσβυτερος) IS EVERY WHERE THROUGHOUT THE NEW TESTAMENT, AND IN THE WRITINGS OF THE FATHERS, TO BE UNDERSTOOD OF THE TEACHERS OR PRESBYTERS, AND NEVER OF THE RULING ELDERS OR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE—nor can we see any weight in any reason which has been assigned for the opposite opinion, nor any necessity for adopting it in order to sustain the scriptural claims and character of the ruling elder. On the contrary, the application of the titles of presbyter and bishop to these officers obscures the whole question of the polity of the apostolic churches; renders ambiguous and general the very title upon which the order of the ministry rests; weakens, and in some measure nullifies, our arguments for one order of ministers against the pretensions of prelacy; leaves the distinction between ministers and ruling elders altogether indefinite; leads to wrong and misconceived views of the nature and duties of ruling elders; gives origin to the whole controversy now agitating the church respecting the *rights* of elders to ordain; and would eventually DESTROY *either the separate order of ministers or the separate order of ruling elders*, since, if both are to be understood by the same terms, both must possess the qualifications required by those to whom these terms are given, and both, therefore, must be required to discharge all the duties of the officers thus qualified and named.

Before leaving this branch of our subject it may be proper to support our views by one or two authorities. Mr. Boyce in his very able and learned work, "A Clear Account of the Ancient Episcopacy," says,[5] "I confess many of the reformed churches have a sort of elders that are not the same with the presbyters of the primitive church, because the latter were properly ordained to the sacred office of the ministry, and empowered thereby to baptize, preach, and administer the sacraments, when desired by the parochial bishops, whose curates they were.

[1] Tom. i. p. 731.
[2] See do. do. pp. 409–414.
[3] See do. do. p. 415, &c.
[4] See do. do. p. 223, &c.
[5] London, 1712, p. 208.

But even these very elders in the reformed churches do very well answer to the seniores plebis, that were distinct from the presbyters, and were of laudable use in the primitive church, (as Blondel has fully shown in his book, De Jure Plebis in regimine Ecclesiastico.")

Grotius says, "that the perpetual offices in the church are two, that of presbyters and deacons. Those I call presbyters, with all the ancient church, who fed the church with the preaching of the gospel, the sacraments, and the keys." (De Imperio, c. x. p. 267; in ibid. p. 39.) "By all which," say the authors of Smectymnuus, who were members of the Westminster Assembly, "it is apparent, first, that in the ancient church there were some called seniors; secondly, that these seniors were not clergymen; thirdly, that they had a stake in governing the church and managing the affairs thereof; and fourthly, that seniors were distinguished from the rest of the people."[1]

It will be interesting to illustrate this subject from the history of the church in England. Among the Culdees we know that there was always a number of lay brethren associated with the presbyters in the government of their communities. Many of the Culdees were laymen. Bede himself admits, says Jameson,[2] that of the many who daily came from the country of the Scots into the province of the Angles over which Oswald reigned, only some were presbyters, where he limits the term presbyter to those who could preach and baptize.

Every member of the fraternity or college had a right, whether lay or clerical, "to sit, speak, and reason in their Synodical assemblies."[3] Boece says that before the time of Palladius "the people by their suffrages chose Bishops from the Monks and Culdees."[4] Sir James Dalrymple says that "in electing the bishop they must have the consensus religiosorum virorum civitatis, which must be meant of the laics and its like, also the laics had the same share in settling the Culdees, who were their pastors."[5]

[1] See also Vitringa de Syn. pp. 479, 482, 484, and Fleury's Hist. Eccl. tom. viii., in Luing, p. 314.

[2] Hist. p. 66, 67.

[3] Jameson, in eo. p. 57.

[4] In Ibid. p. 98, 99.

[5] Collections, p. 134.

"And herein also of questmen," says Burns in his Ecclesiastical Laws, "sidesmen, or assistants. Note, the office of churchwardens, so far as it relates to the repairs or other matters concerning the church, is treated of under the title *Church;* their cognizance of crimes and offences, falleth in under the title *Visitation;* and other branches of their duty, under divers other titles respectively; here it is treated only concerning their office in general, or such other particulars as do not fall in more properly elsewhere.

"In the ancient Episcopal Synods, the bishops were wont to summon divers creditable persons out of every parish, to give information of, and to attest the disorders of clergy and people. These were called *testes synodales;* and were in after times a kind of impanelled jury, consisting of two or three or more persons in every parish, who were upon oath to present all heretics and other irregular persons. Ken. Par. Ant. 649.

"And these in process of time became standing officers in several places, especially in great cities, and from hence were called Synod's men, and by corruption sidesmen; they are also sometimes called questmen, from the nature of their office, in making inquiry concerning offences.

"But for the most part this whole office is now devolved upon the churchwardens, together with that other office which their name more properly importeth, of taking care of the church and of the goods thereof, which they had of very ancient time."[1]

"By Can. 118. The churchwardens and sidesmen shall be chosen the first week after Easter, or some week following, according to the direction of the ordinary.

"And by Can. 89. All churchwardens or questmen in every parish, shall be chosen by the joint consent of the minister and the parishioners, if it may be; but if they cannot agree upon such a choice, then the minister shall choose one, and the parishioners another; and without such a joint or several choice none shall take upon them to be churchwardens."[2]

"Again," says Burns, "the ancient method was not only for the clergy, but the body of the people within such a district, to appear at Synods, or (as we now call them) general visitations;

[1] Burns' Eccl. Law, vol. i. p. 398. [2] Do. do. p. 401.

(for what we now call visitations were really the annual synods, the laws of the church by visitations always being visitations parochial;) the way was, to select a certain number, at the discretion of the ordinary, to give information upon oath concerning the manners of the people within the district; which persons the rule of the canon law upon this head supposes to have been selected, while the synod was sitting; but afterwards, when the body of the people began to be excused from attendance, it was directed in the citation, that four, six, or eight, according to the proportion of the district, should appear together with the clergy, to represent the rest, and to be the testes synodales, as the canon law elsewhere styles them. But all this while, we find nothing of churchwardens presenting, till a little before the reformation, when we find the churchwardens began to present, either by themselves, or with two or three more credible parishioners joined with them; and this (as was before observed) seemeth evidently to be the original of that office which our canons call the office of sidesmen or assistants. Id. 59, 60, 61."[1]

"Every churchwarden," he adds, "is also an overseer of the poor by the statute of the 43 el. c. 2, and as such is joined with the overseer appointed by the justices of the peace in all matters relating to the poor; and indeed the churchwardens were the original overseers long before there were any others specially appointed by act of parliament.

"By Can. 89. The churchwardens or questmen shall not continue any longer than one year in that office, except perhaps they be chosen again in like manner."

The Rev. William Jones, in his Churchman's Catechism, in reference to the same subject, says, "What lay-officers have authority to act for the discipline of the church?

"The churchwardens, chancellors, officials and officers of the court should be laymen.

"Why so?

"That the people when they are corrected for their offences may not think themselves hardly dealt with; the persons to whom they are committed being of their own order.

[1] Burns' Eccl. Law, vol. i. p. 405.

"How long have lay officers acted in the affairs of the church?

"Almost ever since the conversion of the Roman empire, for 1300 years; when persons learned in the laws were granted to the Christians for settling their differences."[1]

[1] Works, vol. xi. p. 421. See also Conder's View of Religions, p. 165. Bernard, in his work on the Synagogue, says, the seniors were "somewhat analogous to our churchwardens."

CHAPTER IV.

The views of the Reformers on the subject of the Eldership, and on the application to it of the term Presbyter.

We deem it altogether unnecessary to adduce any proof that the reformed churches generally adopted the principle that the laity had a right to participate in the government of the church; and that as generally they carried out this belief by the appointment of delegated representatives, chosen by the people, and most commonly called seniors, elders, assistants, commissioners, or by some similar and analogous name. Dr. Miller has left every one without excuse who doubts either of these positions.[1] And the fact that the laity were so represented in the ancient British churches, in the Waldensian churches, and also in the Syrian churches in the distant East, where lay representatives of the people continue to exist to the present day, is very strong presumption of its apostolic origin and practice.

From these ancient churches, Calvin and the other reformers adopted their principles of ecclesiastical polity and discipline. Now besides ministers of the word and sacraments, the Waldenses always had, and held to be necessary, "a certain college of men," to use the words of Bucer concerning them, "excelling in prudence and gravity of spirit, whose office it is to admonish and correct offending brethren." In their ancient discipline, which dates back to the twelfth century, after treating of ministers or pastors, it goes on to say, that "God has given to his people to choose from themselves guides (or pastors) of the

[1] See his work on the Ruling Elder, and Letters on the Christian Ministry, 2d ed.

people, and ancients in their charges according to the diversity of the work in the unity of Christ."[1] In the Confession of Faith now in use among them, these officers are called "les anciens," that is, ancients, seniors, or elders:[2] "selon la pratique de l'-Eglise Ancienne," "according to the practice of the ancient church," where the same word is used. It is hence apparent that among the Waldenses the term presbyter, which is in Spanish, *presbytero*, and in French, *presbtre*, or *prestre*, was not applied by them to the representatives who sit in their assemblies, but the words "*regidors del poble et preires*," and as it regards ordination, it is expressly provided by their Discipline (Article 93) that "the body of the pastors of the church shall give the imposition of hands."[3]

This point is important to our argument, for it can be shown that the whole institution of the office of ruling elders in the reformed churches, may be traced to the Waldenses. The Bohemian brethren, it is well known, were a branch of the Waldenses, having removed from Picardy about two hundred years before the time of Huss. Now in their form of government we have the following direction: "*Tell it to the Church*," that is, to the "*Guides*, whereby the Church is ruled;" and that we may be at no loss who these "Rulers" were, we are told, in a preceding chapter, that they were seniors chosen from among the people for the purpose of governing; and informed that they were distinct from the pastors.[4] And in a Confession drawn up by them in the year 1535, they say,[5] "Elders (*Presbyteri, seu Censores morum*) are honest, grave, pious men, chosen out of the whole congregation, that they may act as guardians of all the rest. To

[1] This is the translation given in Perrin's History of the Waldenses, translated by Lennard. Lond. 1624. p. 54. And that these mean the ruling elders appears from p. 73, where he calls them "the pastors and ancients," and in reference to their synods. See the original in Moreland, and quoted in Plea for Presbytery, p. 350, and given also in Blair's Hist. vol. i. p. 533, and Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 511.

[2] See Le Livre de Famille, &c. Geneve, 1830. Conf. of F. art. XXXI. p. 103.

[3] Discipline of the Vaudois.

[4] See Dr. Miller on the Eldership, p. 108, 2d ed.

[5] Do. do. p. 110.

them authority is given, (either alone, or in connexion with the pastor,) to admonish and rebuke those who transgress the prescribed rules, also to reconcile those who are at variance, and to restore to order whatever irregularity they may have noticed. Likewise in secular matters, relating to domestic concerns, the younger men and youths are in the habit of asking their counsel, and being faithfully advised by them. From the example and practice of the *ancient church*, we believe that this ought always to be done. See Ex. 18: 21. Deut. 1: 18. 1 Cor. 6: 2–4, 5. 1 Tim. 5: 17."

Comenius, the Bohemian historian, and last bishop or superintendent, calls these the assistants of the pastor, and says: "Such are our seniors; they are styled judges of the congregation or censors of the people, and also ruling elders."[1]

Now mark the bearing of this on our present inquiry. Luther, in some of his early writings, had expressed an unfavorable opinion of the Bohemian brethren; but, upon being more fully informed of their doctrine and order, and more especially of their provision for maintaining sound *discipline*, by means of their *Eldership* in each congregation, he changed his opinion, and became willing both to speak and to write strongly in their favor. Hence his highly commendatory Preface to their "Confession of Faith," of which mention has been already made. And hence, at a still later period, the following strong expressions in favor of the same people: "There hath not arisen any people, since the times of the apostles, whose church hath come nearer to the apostolical doctrine and order, than the brethren of Bohemia."

"Bucer, the Swiss reformer, having largely conversed with two of the Waldensian pastors, declared, that they have preserved among them the discipline of Christ, which constrains us to give them this praise." In 1533, Melancthon wrote them as follows: "In reality I do not at all disapprove of that very severe manner of exercising the discipline, which is practised in your churches. Would to God it were enforced with a little more rigor in ours."

We have also evidence that to them Calvin was indebted for

[1] See Dr. Miller on the Eldership, p. 114.

his idea of this office.[1] "We know that this venerable man before he was expelled from Geneva 1538, and while he was struggling and suffering so much for want of an efficient discipline, made no attempt to introduce the institution in question." When Calvin first settled in Geneva in 1536, he found the reformed religion already introduced and to a considerable extent supported, under the ministry of Farel and Viret, two bold and faithful advocates of evangelical truth. Such, however, was the opposition made to the doctrines which they preached, and especially to the purity of discipline which they struggled hard to establish, by the licentious part of the inhabitants, among whom were some of the leading magistrates, that in 1538, Calvin and his colleagues were expelled from their places in the Genevan church, because they refused to administer the Lord's Supper to the vilest of the population who chose to demand the privilege. In a paroxysm of popular fury, those faithful ministers of Christ were commanded to leave the city within two days. During this temporary triumph of error and profligacy, Calvin retired to Strasburg, where he was appointed Professor of Divinity and pastor of a church, and where he remained nearly four years.

In 1540, the year before he was recalled to Geneva, *he corresponded with the Bohemian brethren*, and made himself particularly acquainted with their plan of church government, which he regarded with deep interest; an interest no doubt greatly augmented by the sufferings which he had recently undergone in fruitless efforts to maintain the purity of ecclesiastical discipline; in which efforts he had been baffled chiefly by the want of such an efficient system as the Bohemian churches possessed. "It was when in Strasburg," says Mr. Lorimer in his work on the Eldership, p. 162, "that he was led more fully to study the office of the Ruling Elder, especially in connection with the history of the Bohemian and Waldensian churches, which could trace their origin to a very remote antiquity, and which had always enjoyed the advantage of a numerous and powerful body of such officers. Calvin clearly saw that it was only an ecclesiastical staff of this

[1] See Dr. Miller on the Eldership, p. 118, and 116 and 117. Also, Dr. Laing's Religion and Education in America, p. 315.

kind which could remedy such disorders as those which had prevailed at Geneva; that, in short, had the ministers been supported by a suitable *body of representatives* from the congregation, the tumult would in all probability never have occurred." In the course of his correspondence, while yet in exile for his fidelity, Calvin addressed the Bohemian pastors in the following pointed terms:—"I heartily congratulate your churches, upon which, besides sound doctrine, God hath bestowed so many excellent gifts. Of these gifts, it is none of the least to have such pastors to govern and order them;—to have a people themselves so affected and disposed;—to be constituted under so noble a form of government;—to be adorned with the most excellent discipline, which we justly call most excellent, and indeed the only bond by which obedience can be preserved. I am sure we find with us, by woful experience, what the worth of it is, by the want of it; nor yet can we by any means attain to it. On this account it is, that I am often faint in my mind and feeble in the discharge of my duties. Indeed I should quite despair did not this comfort me, that the edification of the church is always the work of the Lord, which he himself will carry on by his own power though all help besides should fail. Yet still it is a great and rare blessing to be aided by so necessary a help. Therefore I shall not consider our church as properly strengthened, until they can be bound together by that bond." And the pious historian after giving this extract from the venerable Reformer adds: "It so happened, in the course of divine Providence, that, not long afterwards, this eminent man was recalled to minister in the church of Geneva, where he established *the very same kind of discipline* which is now famed throughout the world."

In the year 1541 Calvin says:—"I detailed to the senate my labor; I showed them that the church could not stand, unless a certain form of government were appointed, such as is prescribed to us in the word of God, and was observed in the ancient church. I then touched certain heads, whence they might understand what I wished. But because the whole matter could not be explained, I begged that there should be given us those who might confer with us. Six were appointed to us.

Articles will be written concerning the whole government of a church, which we shall afterwards lay before the senate."[1]

The committee at Geneva reported, laws were prescribed, and a constitution instituted by the General Council, on the 20th of Nov. 1541. The consistory was to contain a double number of laymen, chosen annually; that is, at first it consisted of the six ministers, two laymen from the lesser senate, or council of twenty-five; and ten from the greater, or council of two hundred; one of the syndics presiding. That Calvin did afterwards, says Dr. Wilson, attempt to justify the reception of lay presbyters, from the authority of the Scriptures, his writings evince. It is perfectly clear, nevertheless, that it was adopted at first by him as an expedient for reducing the church at Geneva to a state of discipline, which should secure the reformation at that place. He probably preferred the name consistory, because the judicatory was composed of laymen and elders, for since ordination is by laying on of the hands of the presbytery, if those laymen were members of a presbytery, then they must impose hands, and give an authority which they possessed not. As if apprehensive, also, of the impropriety of denominating men presbyters who had received no ordination, he called them inspectors."[2]

Such then was the original of Calvin's lay representatives of the people. And that he did not regard them as properly entitled to the name of *presbyters* appears, not only from the different name he gave to the court of which they formed a part, and the name he gave to them, but from his positive instructions. In his Institutions, Book 4, chap. 3, he has the following passage, which is explicit. "In calling those who preside over churches by the appellations of "Bishops," "Elders" and "Pastors," without any distinction, I have followed the usage of the Scriptures, which

[1] Epist. 50.

[2] "Non solos verbi ministros sedere judices in consistorio; sed numerum duplo majorem partim ex minori senatu ex delectis senioribus esse, ut vocant, partim ex majore deligi, ad haec unum fere ex syndicis praesidere." Epist. 167. "Deliguntur quotannis duodecim seniores; nempe ex minori senatu duo, reliqui ex ducentis, sive sint indigenae sive ascriptitii cives. Qui probe et fideliter munere suo perfuncti sunt, loco non moventur; nisi," &c. See Dr. Wilson on the Gov't of the Ch. p. 237.

apply all these terms to express the same meaning. For to all who discharge the ministry of the word, they give the title of "Bishops." So when Paul enjoins Titus to "ordain elders in every city," he immediately adds, "for a bishop must be blameless." So in another place, he salutes more bishops than one in one church. And in the Acts of the Apostles he is declared to have sent for the elders of the church of Ephesus, whom in his address to them he calls "Bishops." Here it must be observed that we have enumerated only those offices which consist *in the ministry of the word;* nor does Paul mention any other in the 4th chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians which we have quoted. But in the Epistle to the Romans and the first Epistle to the Corinthians, he enumerates others, as "powers," "gifts of healing," "interpretation of tongues," "governments," "care of the poor." Those functions which are merely temporary, I omit, as foreign to our present subject. But there are two which perpetually remain, "governments," and "the care of the poor." "Governors," I apprehend to have been persons of advanced years, *selected from the people* to unite with the bishops in giving admonition and exercising discipline. For no other interpretation can be given of that injunction, "He that ruleth let him do it with diligence." For from the beginning, every church has had its senate, or council, composed of pious, grave and holy men, who were invested with that jurisdiction, for the correction of vices, of which we shall soon treat. Now, that this was not the regulation of a single age, experience itself demonstrates. This office of government is necessary therefore in every age."[1]

Dr. Miller has undoubtedly shown that both Zuingle and Œcolompadius before the time of Calvin had openly taught the scriptural claims of the office of ruling elders, whom they denominated elders of another kind, that is, senators, leaders or counsellors, or as the latter calls them, in accordance with ancient usage, "*seniors.*"[2] A consistory was established at Zuric, A. D. 1525, "for the decision of matrimonial and other causes which had hitherto been carried before the bishop of Constance," and an-

[1] Scott's Continuation of Milnor, vol. 2, p. 521.

[2] On the Eldership, ch. vi. p. 121, 122.

other at St. Gallen, A. D. 1526, for the same objects.[1] But the constitution of these courts shows plainly that whatever may have been the subsequent views of these reformers, they did not regard the office of ruler in the light in which we now consider the ruling elder. For in both cases the members of these courts were chosen either by the state, as at Zuric, or by popular vote. Zuingle thus delineates his views.[2] "I will briefly explain the use made of the council in these affairs, since we are calumniated by some for leaving to the decision of two hundred persons, that which ought to be referred to the whole church, consisting of seven thousand. Thus then the case stands. We the ministers of Zuric have some time back freely admonished the council that we consent to refer to them *what properly belongs to the judgment of the whole church*, on no other condition than this, that in their deliberations and decrees they shall take the word of God for their guide. We have reminded them also, that they on no other terms stand in the place of the church, than as the church has *voluntarily* (benigne) consented to receive their decrees. We proclaimed the same sentiments to the church at large; observing to them, that in times like these, when numbers are swayed by perverse affections, which they would vainly have to be taken for the suggestions of the Spirit, many things cannot be safely committed to the votes of a multitude: not that we have any apprehensions that God would desert his church, but because, while all its institutions are yet green and tender among us, the occasions of contention are to be avoided. We have recommended it therefore to the people to leave to the council the regulation of external matters, under the direction of the word of God; promising that, if ever we see the authority of that word likely to be disregarded, we will not fail to cry out and give them warning. To this the church has hitherto consented, not by any formal resolution, but by a peaceable and grateful acquiescence." He then refers to a scriptural example, by which he conceives such a course to be sanctioned, and proceeds: "That the council in these affairs acts not in its

[1] Scott's Continuation of Milnor, p. 578.

[2] Do. do. do. vol. iii. p. 32, and p. 91, and T. Op. ii. 248.

own name, but in that of the church, is evident from this, that whatever is determined here, in Zuric, (as for instance concerning images, the eucharist and the like,) is left free to the churches in the country, which consist of smaller numbers, to be adopted or rejected, as seems to them fit. And our measures have so succeeded that the blessing of God upon them is manifest. We are likewise careful so to instruct the people on those subjects on which the council has to decide, that whatever the latter, in conjunction with the ministers, ordains, is, in fact, already ordained in the minds of the faithful."

"A General Synod also of the clergy of the canton was appointed, to assemble twice every year, with one of the burgomasters and eight members of the council, (somewhat resembling, therefore, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland,) to superintend the doctrine and manners of the clergy, and the conduct of all ecclesiastical affairs."

Œcolompadius, however, makes an entire distinction between the church and the state, on which subject he delivered a copious oration before the council of Berne. He there takes the position "that what may or even can be done by the magistrate does not supersede, indeed that it scarcely at all takes the place of, a well administered church discipline."

In "The Confession of the Churches of Switzerland," adopted as a platform of union and agreement at the conference held at Basle, A. D. 1536, drawn up by Bullinger, Myconius and Grynceus, and translated into English by the Scottish Martyr, George Wishart, about A. D. 1540, in Art. xviii. it calls ministers "presidents, heads and teachers." In Art. xix., which treats of "the duty of ministers or officers," it declares that one end of the ministry is, "that by a godly consent and agreement of them who are chosen by the ministers or magistrates for correction," &c. And in Art. xvii. of "the choosing ministers or officers," it is declared that their election "is well and justly approved by the voice of the church and the imposition of the hands of the heads of the priests," that is, of those appointed to the duty. Now, from this we learn, that in accordance with our interpretation of 1 Tim. 5: 17, *moderators* are called *presidents;* that ruling elders are not called by this name nor founded

upon any express divine authority, but are called officers chosen by the ministers or magistrates; and that only ministers were authorized to assist in the imposition of hands; and lastly, that these were the views taken by the early founders of the Scottish church.[1]

We introduce these quotations the rather because they confirm so pointedly our view of the foundation on which the office of ruling elders as representatives of the people rests—the power given by Christ to every member of his church, to take part in the ecclesiastical government of his church, and the power therefore of the people to act in this matter, either as a body or by chosen delegates, as the example of the Scripture warrants, and which experience has so fully justified as both wise and necessary.

Other Swiss cantons hearing of the "*orders*" of Geneva, were led to imitate them. Calvin, in reply to one church which sought his advice, says, "it would certainly be great impudence to disapprove of that in your case, which we ourselves have adopted as both good and useful."[2] Geneva and Lausanne, from their contiguity to France, so greatly influenced the work of reformation in that kingdom, that, so early as 1550, the reformed societies of that country were generally in communion with the church at Geneva, and had adopted the doctrines of Calvin. The Gallic confession, exhibited to Charles IX. in 1561, thus expresses their views: "We believe that the true church ought to be governed by that discipline which our Lord Jesus Christ has decreed; namely, that there should be in it pastors, *presbyters* or *seniors*, and deacons; that purity of doctrine may be preserved, vice restrained, the poor and others in affliction provided for," &c.

In the next century, the churches were left by the acts of the synod of Charenton, in 1645, to their choice on the subject of elders.[3]

Calvin's discipline spread from France to the Netherlands.

[1] See a republication of this inaccessible Tract, and of Wishart's Translation in the Miscellany of the Wodrow Society, vol. i. Eduit. 1844. Art. 1.

[2] Ep. 55.

[3] See quoted below.

For these churches, when scattered by persecution, held a synod at Emden in 1569, at which it was agreed, "that in the French congregations, the Geneva catechism might be held, and in the Dutch that of Heidelberg." Also, they declared that "no church shall have, or exercise dominion over another, and no minister, elder, or deacon, shall bear rule over others of the same degree;" which is Calvin's order.

The first presbytery erected in England, was convened in 1572, when eleven elders were chosen, and their proceedings were entitled, "The Orders of Wadsworth;" imitating the style of the order of the church at Geneva.

Knox visited Geneva in 1554, and became the disciple and friend of Calvin, and used both at Frankfort and at Geneva, in the English congregation over which he presided, "The Book of Common Order," which Calvin assisted in drawing up. In this there is provision made for "an assembly or consistory" of "the pastors or ministers" and "elders," who are thus carefully distinguished in their titles, and also in their functions. For of ministers, of whom it recognizes two kinds, "the pastor" and "the teacher or doctor," (ch. i. and iv.) it is said, their "chief office standeth in preaching the word of God and ministering the sacraments," under which terms it evidently includes ordination, since it quotes in proof of this general definition of power, Acts 13: 2, 3, where the presbyters of Antioch ordained Paul and Barnabas for the work whereunto God had called them, (see ch. i.) Of elders it is said, "they differ from the ministers in that they preach not the word *nor* minister the sacraments," (ch. ii.) where the same definition is repeated, so that elders are of course excluded from the work of ordination and imposition of hands.

In the following year Knox, with others, drew up "The First Book of Discipline," which was adopted in Scotland. This provides for the election of "elders" or "seniors," (ch. x. §§ 2, 5, 8,) which last name is most frequently used. "The election (ch. x. § 3) of elders and deacons ought to be made every year once, which we judge to be most convenient on the first day of August; lest of long continuance of such officers, men

[1] Dr. Wilson, p. 247.

presume upon the liberty of the kirk: (and yet) it hurteth not that one be received in office more years than one, so that he be appointed yearly (thereto) by common and free election; provided always, that the deacons and treasurers be not compelled to receive the (same) office again for the space of three years. How the votes and suffrages may be best received, so that every man may give his vote freely, every several church may take such order as best seems (to) them.

"The elders being elected, must be admonished of their office, which is to assist the ministers in all public affairs of the church; to wit, in determining and judging causes, in giving admonition to the licentious liver, in having respect to the manners and conversation of all men within their charge. For by the gravity of the seniors, the light and unbridled life of the licentious must be corrected and bridled.

"We think it not necessary," it is added, "that any public stipend shall be appointed, either to the elders, or yet to the deacons, because their travel continues but for a year; and also because that they are not so occupied with the affairs of the church, but that reasonably they may attend upon their domestic business."[1]

It is further provided, (chap. iv. § 10)[2] that "other ceremony than the public approbation of the people, and declaration of the chief minister, that the person there presented is appointed to serve the church, we cannot approve; for albeit the apostles used imposition of hands, yet seeing the miracle is ceased, the using of the ceremony we judge not necessary."

It will however be observed, that all that was regarded as equivalent to imposition of hands was then performed by the *pre-*

[1] Dr. McCrie, in the second volume of his life of Calvin, proves that the continued practice of the church, was the "annual election" of elders: see also Dr. Aiton's Life of Henderson, p. 336. This author adds, "A layman as elder cannot moderate in the assembly, or in any other church court, because such meetings begin and end with prayer, and ruling elders have no calling to pray publicly in our church; they are but assistants in discipline."

[2] This opinion respecting imposition of hands, was not peculiar to the Reformers, but common also to the Romish doctors. See Calderwood's Altare Damascenum, p. 174, 175. See also Seaman's Vindication of Ordination p. 75, 78; and Courayer on English Ordination, passim.

siding minister, without any concurrence of the elders in the act.

In the Second Book of Discipline, which was adopted in 1578, and continued in force in the Church of Scotland until the adoption of the Westminster standards, in chap. ii. it is said, " The whole policy of the kirk consisteth in doctrine, discipline, and distribution. With doctrine is annexed the administration of sacraments," including of course ordination, as in the Book of Common Order ; " and according to the parties of this division, arises a threefold sort of office-bearers in the kirk, to wit, of ministers or preachers, elders or governors, and deacons or distributors."

There are (chap. ii. § 6)[1] four ordinary functions or offices in the church of God : the office of the pastor, minister, or bishop ; the doctor ; the presbyter or elder ; and the deacon.

It is added, (chap. iii. § 3,) " All these should take these titles and names only (lest they be exalted and puffed up in themselves) which the Scriptures give unto them, as those which import labor, travel, and work, and are names of offices and service and not of idleness, dignity, worldly honor, or pre-eminence, which by Christ our master is expressly reproved and forbidden."

The duty of the pastors is thus expressed (chap. iv. § 6–12) : " Unto the pastors appertains teaching of the word of God, in season and out of season, publicly and privately, always travelling to edify and discharge his conscience, as God's word prescribes to him.

" Unto the pastors only appertains the administration of the sacraments, in like manner as the administration of the word ; for both are appointed by God as means to teach us, the one by the ear, and the other by the eyes and other senses, that by both knowledge may be transferred to the mind.

[1] In chapter xi. § 9, it is added, " As to bishops, if the name επισκοπος be properly taken, they are all one with the ministers, as before was declared. For it is not a name of superiority and lordship, but of office and watching. Yet, because in the corruption of the church, this name (as others) has been abused, and yet is likely to be ; we cannot allow the fashion of their new chosen bishops, neither of the chapiters that are electors of them to such offices as they are chosen to."

" It appertains by the same reason to the pastors to pray for the people, and namely for the flock committed to his charge, and to bless them in the name of the Lord, who will not suffer the blessings of his faithful servants to be frustrated.

" He ought also to watch over the manners of his flock, that the better he may apply the doctrine to them in reprehending the dissolute persons, and exhorting the godly to continue in the fear of the Lord.

" It appertains to the minister, after lawful proceeding by the eldership, to pronounce the sentence of binding and loosing upon any person, according unto the power of the keys granted unto the church.

" It belongs to him likewise, after lawful proceedings in the matter by the eldership, to solemnize marriage betwixt them that are to be joined therein; and to pronounce the blessing of the Lord upon them that enter in that holy band in the fear of God.

" And generally *all public denunciations* that are to be made in the kirk before the congregation, *concerning the ecclesiastical* affairs, belong to the office of a minister; for he is a messenger and herald betwixt God and the people in all these affairs."

The office of " Doctor" is maintained and fully described in Chapter fifth.[1]

Of " elders" who do not " labor in word and doctrine," (chap. vii. § 1,) it is said, (chap. vi.,) " The word Elder in the Scripture sometimes is the name of age, sometimes of office. When it is the name of an office sometimes it is taken largely, comprehending as well the pastors and doctors, as them who are called seniors or elders.

" In this our division we call these elders whom the Apostles call presidents or governors. Their office, as it is ordinary so it is perpetual, and always necessary in the church of God. The eldership is a spiritual function, as is the ministry. Elders once lawfully called to the office and having gifts of God meet to exercise the same, may not leave it again. Albeit such a number of elders may be chosen in certain congregations, that one part of

[1] There is thought to be an allusion to this office in 1 Cor. 14: 30. See Bernard's Synagogue and the Church, p. 249.

them may relieve another for a reasonable space, as was among the Levites under the law in serving of the temple. The number of the elders in every congregation cannot well be limited, but should be according to the bounds and necessities of the people."

Of church sessions it is said, (chap. vii. § 10,) "The first kind and sort of assemblies, although they be within particular congregations, yet they exercise THE POWER, AUTHORITY, AND JURISDICTION OF THE CHURCH WITH MUTUAL CONSENT, and therefore bear sometimes the name of the church. When we speak of the elders of the particular congregations, we mean not that every particular parish church can or may have their own particular elderships, specially to landwart, but we think three or four, more or fewer particular churches, may have one common eldership to them all, to judge their ecclesiastical causes. Albeit this is meet, that some of the elders be chosen out of every particular congregation, to concur with the rest of their brethren in the common assembly, and to take up the delations of offences within their own churches, and bring them to the assembly. This we gather of the practice of the primitive church, where elders or colleges of seniors were constituted in cities and famous places."

As for elders, it is added in chap. xii. § 5, "There would be some to be censurers of the manners of the people, one or more in every congregation; but not an assembly of elders in every particular church, but only in towns and famous places where resort of men of judgment and ability to that effect may be had, where the elders of the particular churches about may convene together, and have a common eldership and assembly place among them, to treat of all things that concern the congregations of which they have the oversight."

In "The Form of Process of the Judicatories of the Church of Scotland," adopted in 1707, chap. i. § 2, it is said,[1] "It is agreeable to and founded on the word of God, that some others, besides those who labor in the word and doctrine, be church governors, to join with the ministers of the word in the government of the church, and exercise of discipline and oversight of

[1] See Books of Discipline, &c. Edinburgh, 1836. p. 131.

the manners of the people, which officers are called ruling elders: as also that the church be governed by several sorts of judicatories, and one in subordination to the other, such as church sessions, presbyteries, provincial synods, and general assemblies."

In Stewart's Collections, which was formerly of authority in this country as well as in Scotland, we find among much to the same purpose the following hints:—

In Book I. Title I. § 21,[1] "Our church doth condemn any doctrine that TENDS to support the people's power of ordaining their ministers; for by the 5th act of Assembly, 1698, upon information that a divine of the Church of England had in his sermon charged them as corrupters of the word of God, who, to favor popular ordinations, had caused that passage of Scripture, Acts 6. 3, "whom *we* may appoint over this business," to be printed "whom *ye* may appoint," &c., they did unanimously disclaim the above-mentioned error of the press, and did declare they did not own any other reading of that text to be according to the original but "whom *we* may appoint," &c. This of course limits ordination to ministers.

Describing the form of ordination services, it is said, (§ 24,) "In the most conspicuous place of the church, and near to the pulpit, a table and seats being placed, where the brethren of the presbytery, the heritors and elders of the congregation, with the magistrates and council, when in burghs royal, are to sit, together with the intrant, so that ALL THE MINISTERS may conveniently give him imposition of hands, and *the others may take him by the hand*, when thereunto called; the minister is to come from the pulpit to the foresaid place, where the intrant kneeling (for the more decent and convenient laying on of hands) and the brethren standing, he, *as their mouth*, in their Master's name and authority, doth in and by prayer set the candidate apart (not only *the* minister who prays but *all the* brethren that conveniently can, laying their hands upon his head) to the office of the ministry, invoking God for his blessing to this effect."

In Title VII. of Ruling Elders, it is said, "He is called a

[1] See Edinb. ed. 1709. 4to. And also a Compendium of the Law of the Ch. of Scotland, vol. i. p. 194.

ruling elder, because to rule and govern the church is the chief part of his charge and employment therein; and albeit he may act as a deacon, yet his principal business is to rule well, and it belongs not to him to preach or teach." "Their ordination is to be *by the minister of the congregation, or by one from the presbytery*, in the case above supposed, in the presence of the congregation, upon a Lord's day after sermon is ended in the forenoon; at which time, the minister calling upon the persons chosen to be elders, they are to be interrogated concerning their orthodoxy, and to be taken solemnly engaged to adhere to and maintain the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the church, and to lay themselves forth, by their office and example, to suppress vice, cherish piety, and exert discipline faithfully and diligently. Then the elders chosen, still standing up, the minister is next, by solemn prayer, to set them apart, *in verbis de presenti*. After prayer the minister is to exhort both elders and people to their respective duties.

"The duties of elders which are more public are those which lie upon them in the assemblies of the church, in which ruling elders have right to reason and vote in all matters coming before them, even as ministers have; for to general assemblies their commissions bear them to the same power with pastors. Howbeit, by the practice of our church, the execution of some decrees of the church doth belong to the pastors only; *such as the imposition of hands*, the pronouncing the sentences of excommunication and absolution, the receiving of penitents, the intimation of sentences and censures about ministers, and such like. In short, the elder is to speak nothing to the church from the pulpit."

In Title IX. of Moderators, it is said, "Seeing the moderator is frequently called to exercise the power of order, as solemn public ecclesiastic prayer, at least twice every session, to wit, at its first opening, and then at its closing, authoritative exhortation, rebuke, direction, it is convenient the moderator be always a minister."[1]

[1] Another reason is assigned in a very old Scotch work, "The Case of the Accommodation examined," p. 24. "Where the Session doth consist of one minister, both a preaching and a ruling elder, and the other elders of the congregation, who are but his helpers in discipline, his different quality, with the

In Title XII. of Presbyters, it is said, "The directory for government saith, that to perform any classical act of government or ordination, there shall be present at least a major part of the ministers of the whole *classis*."

That the views here given of the power of the ruling elders, is accordant to the uniform practice of the Church of Scotland, is proved by undeniable evidence. Calderwood asserts the fact that ruling elders did not lay on hands in his day, and adds, "Finally, though we should grant this act (the laying on of hands) to be a sacrament, and that the administrators of this sacrament are Pastor-presbyters only, still the others will not thereby be excluded from the Presbytery, (1 Tim. 4. 14,) because the laying on of hands does not belong to them; for the imposition of hands may be called the "imposition of the hands of the Presbytery," although each and every one of the Presbytery have not the power of imposing hands. It is enough that the leading part of the Presbytery have that power, just as the tribe of Levi is said to offer incense, when it was the prerogative of the priests only."

The same fact which is ascertained by the Altare Damascenum, is also established in the History of the Church of Scotland, by the same illustrious author.[1]

This matter is set at rest by the following communication, addressed to Dr. Miller, by one of the most accomplished antiquaries of the Church of Scotland, and which we take the liberty of transcribing, in order still more widely to give it circulation:

"The first question is, 'Did the Ruling Elders of the Church of Scotland, under the Second Book of Discipline, ever, in fact, lay on hands in the ordination of Pastors?' As the question refers to matter of fact, it is unnecessary to enter into any examination of the Second Book of Discipline itself, which, in my humble opinion, gives no countenance to the notion that Ruling Elders should lay on hands in ordination, any more than that they should preach the sermon, or offer up the ordination prayer. In

double honor allowed to him by the Apostle, doth abundantly determine the moderatorship in his favor."

[1] See Altare Damascenum, cap. xii. de administr. Laicis, p. 689, and in Dr. Miller, Office of Ruling Elders, p. 128.

point of fact, I do not remember any instance in which such a practice was observed under the Second Book of Discipline; and I have had frequent opportunities of examining, with this or similar objects in view, such works as Calderwood's Larger History; 'The Book of the Universal Kirk;' Scott's MSS. in the Advocate's Library, (in which he gives frequent notices of the election of Elders and Deacons, during both periods of the Reformation,) and the other documents of that period.

"But the best way of arriving at satisfaction on this point is by consulting the writings of our Reformers, who have treated expressly of the subject. The first authority I may cite is that of the celebrated Alexander Henderson, in the treatise which it is well ascertained was written by him, and published in the year 1641, two years before the Westminster Assembly sat down, entitled 'The Government and Order of the Church of Scotland.' In this treatise, which was written for the information of the English, and contains minute details of the practice observed at ordinations, he says, section ii., when speaking of the ordination of Ministers—'The Minister cometh from the Pulpit, and, with as many of the Ministers present as may conveniently come near, lay their hands upon his head, and in the name of Jesus, do appoint him to be the pastor of that people.'

"In another treatise, by the well known Samuel Rutherford, entitled, 'A Peaceable Plea for Paul's Presbytery in Scotland,' and published in 1642, the same fact is repeatedly brought out, and the practice defended on scriptural grounds, as well as the nature of the ministerial office. He says, 'Every where, in the word, where pastors and elders are created, there they are ordained by Pastors.' p. 37. 'Ordination of pastors is never given to people, or believers, or to Ruling Elders, but still to Pastors, as is clear from 1 Tim. 5: 22; Titus 1: 5; Acts 6: 6; Acts 13: 3; 2 Tim. 1: 6; 1 Tim. 4: 14.' p. 190. In this treatise Rutherford argues on the principle that if believers, who are not pastors may ordain pastors, they may again depose and excommunicate, which, says he, 'are the highest acts of jurisdiction; and then may they preach and baptize, not being called ministers; then may the Sacraments be administrate, where there are no pastors, which is absurd, even to the separatists themselves.' p. 57.

"To these authorities I may be permitted to add that of James Guthrie, of Sterling, who, in his treatise of Elders and Deacons, observes—'Howbeit the execution of some decrees of the Church Assemblies, such as the imposition of hands—the pronouncing the sentence of excommunication—the receiving penitents—the intimation of the deposition of Ministers, and such like, do belong to *Ministers alone.*' Guthrie follows throughout the rules laid down in the first and second Books of Discipline. I am not aware that in the matter of ordination, there was the slightest variation made from the order of these books, after the Westminster Assembly, which affected the point in question."

We now come to the Westminster Assembly. Here the subject of ruling elders gave origin to "many a brave dispute for ten days." Besides the Independents, "sundrie," says Baillie,[1] "of the ablest were flat against the institution of any such officer by divine right—such as Dr. Smith, Dr. Temple, Mr. Gataker, Mr. Vines, Mr. Price, Mr. Hall, and many more, beside the Independents, who truly spake much and exceedingly well. The most of the synod was in our opinion, and reasoned bravely for it; such as Mr. Seaman, Mr. Walker, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Newcomen, Mr. Young, Mr. Calamy. Sundry times Mr. Hendersone, Mr. Rutherford, Mr. Gillespie, all three, spoke exceedingly well. When all were tired, it came to the question. There was no doubt but we would have carried it by far most voices; yet because the opposites were men very considerable, above all gracious and learned little Palmer, we agreed upon a committee to satisfy, if it were possible, the dissenters."

Again he adds,[2] "We have been in a pitiful labyrinth these twelve days, about Ruling Elders; we yet stick into it."

Again he says,[3] "We have, after very many days' debate, agreed, *nemine contradicente*, that beside ministers of the word, there is OTHER ECCLESIASTIC GOVERNOURS to join with the ministers of the word in the government of the church; that such are agreeable unto, and warranted by the word of God, especially

[1] Baillie's Letters and Journals. Edinb. 1841. vol. ii. p. 110.
[2] Do. do. p. 115.
[3] Do. do. pp. 116, 117.

the 12th Rom. 8; 1 Cor. 12: 28; that in the Jewish church, the Elders of the people did join in Ecclesiastic government with the Priests and Levites, according to 2 Chron. 19: 8. How many and how learned debates we had on these things, in twelve or thirteen sessions from nine to half-past two, it were long to relate."

Again, speaking of Church Sessions, he says,[1] "For our sessions, a great party in the Synod, for fear of Ruling Elders, and in opposition to Independencie, will have no ecclesiastic court at all, but one Presbyterie for all the congregations within its bounds."

It is thus manifest that the Westminster Assembly could not unite in affirming the divine institution of the office of Ruling Elders, and that they did not regard them as referred to in the passage in 1 Tim. 5: 17. In "the Grand Debate concerning Presbytery and Independency by the Assembly of Divines,[2] the language is, "the ministers and ruling governors," or "governing officers,"[3] and all that the Assembly could agree upon was, that "it is agreeable to, and warranted by the word of God, that some others besides the ministers of the word, or *church governors*, should join with the ministers in the government of the church."[4] Such is the uniform language of "The Form of Government" issued by this Assembly, as may be seen by a reference to it under the heads of "Officers of the Church," "Other Church Governors," "Of the Officers of a Particular Congregation," "Of Classical Assemblies," and throughout the whole work; and never on one occasion do they appropriate to such elders the passage in 1 Tim. 5: 17, or call them by the name there supposed to be given to such officers, viz. *ruling elders*. "Even the accommodation," observes Mr. Hetherington,[5] "by means of which these propositions were framed and carried, was

[1] Baillie's Letters and Journals. Edinb. 1841. vol. ii. p. 175.

[2] Our copy is in 3 vols. 4to, and contains the Papers for Accommodation and on other points.

[3] See Papers of Accommodation, p. 5. Lond. 1648.

[4] This was proved by Rom. 12: 7, 8, and 1 Cor. 12: 28. See Hetherington's Hist., p. 169, Eng. ed.

[5] Do. do.

somewhat of a perilous experiment; for it narrowly missed introducing the unsound principle of admitting into the arrangements of the church what had no higher authority than considerations of expediency and prudence. For all were willing to have admitted the order of ruling elders on these grounds; but this was decidedly rejected, especially by the Scottish divines, and by those of the Puritans or English Presbyterians, who fully understood the nature of the controversy so long waged by their predecessors against admitting into a divine institution any thing of merely human invention."

On the 9th of January, 1644, the whole question of ordination was fairly stated by Dr. Temple, chairman of one of the committees, in the following series of interrogatory propositions: "1. What ordination is? 2. Whether necessarily to be continued? 3. Who to ordain? 4. What persons to be ordained, and how qualified? 5. The manner how?" To these were appended the following answers for the Assembly's consideration: 1. Ordination is the solemn setting apart of a person to some public office in the church. 2. It is necessarily to be continued in the church. 3. The apostles ordained, the evangelists did, preaching presbyters did; because apostles and evangelists are officers extraordinary, and not to continue in the church; and since, in Scripture, we find ordination in no other hands, we humbly conceive that the preaching presbyters are only to ordain."

These propositions gave rise to a long and learned debate, which is published in a quarto volume,[1] and in which "the Dissenting Brethren," that is, the Independents, *affirmed*, and the Presbyterians *denied*, the following proposition:[2] "Where there is a sufficient presbytery, all and sole power in ordination may be assumed, though association may be had; but there may be a sufficient presbytery in a particular congregation."

"The discussion of this question," says Lightfoot, "had been managed with the most heat and confusion of any thing that had happened among us;" and to defeat the proposition of the As-

[1] London. 1648.

[2] See Grand Debate, vol. i. p. 191, &c.

sembly, namely, "That no single congregation, which may conveniently join together in an association, may assume unto itself all and sole power of ordination," they mustered all their adherents; and when, therefore, it is now alleged by any that the power of ordination rests *in the eldership* OF A PARTICULAR CONGREGATION, and that ruling elders who are not ministers *may ordain*, we can be at no loss to perceive how perfectly they coincide with the Independents, and how openly they oppose the deliverance given by this Assembly, and by the universal testimony and practice of Presbyterian churches every where.

The urgency with which the Assembly presents their views on this point in their published "Form of Government," which is still in force in the Church of Scotland, and in all affiliated branches of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, Ireland, England, and America, is very remarkable. We have before us an original edition, printed in London. Under the head "Of Ordination of Ministers," it is said, "Every minister of the word is to be ordained by imposition of hands, and prayer, with fasting, by those preaching presbyters to whom it doth belong. 1 Tim. 5 : 22, Acts 14 : 23, and 13 : 3."

Again, under the head, "Touching the power of Ordination," it is said, "Ordination is the act of a presbytery. 1 Tim. 4 : 14." The power of ordering the whole work of ordination is in the whole presbytery, which, when it is over more congregations than one, whether those congregations be fixed or not fixed, in regard of officers or members, it is indifferent as to the point of ordination. 1 Tim. 4 : 14.

"The preaching presbyters, orderly associated, either in cities or neighboring villages, are those to whom the imposition of hands doth appertain for those congregations within their bounds respectively."

Again, under the head of "The Doctrinal part of Ordination of Ministers," (§ 4,) it is declared, "Every minister of the word is to be ordained by imposition of hands, and prayer, with fasting, by those preaching presbyters to whom it doth belong. 1 Tim. 5 : 22, Acts 14 : 23, & 13 : 3."

And in § 10, "Preaching presbyters, orderly associated in cities or neighboring villages, are those to whom the im-

position of hands doth appertain, for those congregations within their bounds respectively. 1 Tim. 4 : 17."

Again, in "The Directory for Ordination of Ministers," after describing the order of service, it is added, (§ 7,) "Which being mutually promised by the people, the presbytery, or the ministers sent from them for ordination, shall solemnly set him apart to the office and work of the ministry, by laying their hands on him, which is to be accompanied with a short prayer or blessing, to this effect."

Nay, so scrupulous were they on this point, that in the rules they drew up to meet the emergency of the times, and the demand for a speedy way of ordination, they require that no one shall be ordained but "by some, who being set apart themselves for the work of the ministry, have power to join in the setting apart of others, who are found fit and worthy."

Similar and as clear was the judgment of Calvin.[1] "The imposition of hands in the ordination of ministers is confined to pastors alone." With these views concurs the explicit teaching of the Reformed churches of France, as appears from their governments and discipline.

On this point the learned antiquary, already quoted, says, "I am not aware of any Presbyterian body whose ruling elders *are*, or *ever were*, in the habit of imposing hands in the ordination of ministers. The subject, I understand, has been agitated in the Presbyterian Churches of England and Ireland; and Mr. Lorimer, of Glasgow, stated, in his late publication on the Eldership, that it is contemplated in the Irish Church, to set elders apart to their office in this way. But I do not recollect of ever hearing it mooted, in any quarter, to permit ruling elders to impose hands on ministers. The raising of such a question may be viewed in one respect as indicating the revival of a strong Presbyterian spirit, though somewhat in the *Puseyite direction;* while, in another respect, it appears to me inconsistent with Presbyterianism, and verging towards Independency."

Baxter offers five reasons why ruling elders should not ordain, and why preachers or pastors alone should exercise this

[1] See Instit. lib. iv. c. iii. § 16.

function.[1] Mr. Lazarus Seaman, who was a member of the Westminster Assembly, in his "Vindication," says,[2] "Of what consequence it is that ministers should keep up a peculiar interest of acting in the name of, and instead of Christ, by something peculiar to themselves."

He quotes Zanchius as saying,[3] "It matters not whether hands be laid on by all the ministers who are present, or by one in the name of the rest."

He also quotes the Leyden professors as saying, "Though the power of ordaining or confirming pastors (say they) belongs to the whole presbytery; yet of old the presbytery did execute that in the rite of laying on of hands, not so much by ruling elders as by pastors, who did especially attend on prophecy or explication of the Scripture, and application of it to the use of the faithful, *unde prophetia cum manum impositione perquam olim fiebat ordinatio pastorum, ab apostolo conjungitur.* 1 Tim. 4 : 14. By this it appears they have a singular opinion of the word *prophecy*, not of the word *presbytery;* for they plainly suppose the presbytery consisted of two sorts of elders, and yet that PREACHING ELDERS ONLY LAID ON HANDS. And well they might suppose that, (as doth your author so often cited, p. 171,) because much of prayer and teaching is to accompany the act of imposition, before and after."

It will also be observed that the institution of ruling elders was opposed not only by the Independents, but by Dr. Temple, Dr. Smith, Mr. Gataker, Mr. Vines, Mr. Price, Mr. Hall, Mr. Lightfoot, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Palmer, and several others, who were not Independents.[4] Baxter affirms that "the greater part if not three to one" of the English ministers denied the divine institution of this office, among whom he was himself a very bold and open champion.[5] The Reformed churches of Hungary and Transylvania, while they regarded ruling elders as allowable, did

[1] Disputations on Ch. Gov't. Lond. 1659. p. 265–267.

[2] Lond. 1647. 4to. p. 67. [3] Ibid. p. 85.

[4] Hetherington, p. 168. Dr. Alexander's Hist. of, pp. 103, 217, 259.

[5] See Disput. on Ch. Gov't; Pref. p. 4, and 265–267; and Works, vol. i. p. 94.

not introduce them into their own polity.[1] The French churches decided at the Synod of Charenton, in 1645,[2] "We agree the office of deacon is of divine appointment, and that it belongs to their office to receive, lay out, and distribute the church's stock to its proper use, by the direction of the pastor, and the brethren, if need be. And whereas divers are of opinion that there is also the office of ruling elders, who labor not in word and doctrine, and others think otherwise, we agree that this difference make no breach among us."

The Remonstrants[3] acknowledge only "bishops and elders," who, "by preaching the gospel, by teaching wholesome or saving truth, by confuting errors contrary thereunto; also by exhorting, comforting, reproving, correcting, ruling, and lastly, by going before others, by their example, &c., might preserve or keep together the churches already planted, and by a continual succession, to their utmost power, might propagate the same. And they ordained deacons, that after they had been first proved or tried, they might diligently employ themselves, in gathering and distributing alms, and in pious and tender care-taking of the poor in the said congregations."

From this review of the sentiments of the Reformed churches, it would appear that they universally admitted the right of the Christian laity to a participation in the government of the church, to elect their own ministers and officers, and to appoint rulers who might act as their representatives in carrying out the discipline and government of Christ's church. This was the case not only in the Presbyterian churches, but also in the Anglican church, which alone retained the prelatical form. The clear and full opinions of Dr. Whitaker, Archbishop Whitgift, Archbishop Cranmer, Dean Nowell in his authorized catechism, the approval given by Edward VI. and his clergy to the order of the French church formed in London by John A-Lasco, and also of Thorndike and Dr. John Edwards, have been given in their

[1] Voetius, Polit. Eccl. tom. iii. p. 459.
Quick's Syndicon, vol. i. p. 229, and vol. ii. p. 472.
[3] Confession or Declaration of; Lond 1676, pp. 225, 226.

own words by Dr. Miller and others.[1] And the reason why an office so approved by the English reformers and divines, was not adopted in its practice, is given by Bishop Burnet. He informs us that many learned and pious divines, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, had observed the new models set up in Geneva and other places, for the censuring of scandalous persons, by mixed judicatories of ministers and laity; and these, reflecting on the great looseness of life which had been universally complained of in King Edward's time, thought such a platform might be an effectual way for keeping out a return of the like disorders. But certain wise politicians of that age demonstrated to the Queen that these models would certainly bring with them a great abatement of her prerogative; since, if the concerns of religion came into popular hands, there would be a power set up distinct from hers, over which she could have no authority."[2] And that this opinion still prevails in the English church we might prove from many sources. We quote, however, the opinion of Archbishop Whately.[3]

It may be needful to add, that if in a church thus constituted, or in any other, the *laity* are admitted to a share in the government of it, and to ecclesiastical offices, this would be, not only allowable, but wise and right. That laymen—that is, those who hold no *spiritual* office—should take part in legislating for the church, and should hold *ecclesiastical* offices, as in the Scotch kirk, and in the American Episcopalian church, (always supposing, however, that they are MEMBERS of the church; not as in this country, belonging to other communions,) is far better than that the whole government should be in the hands of men

[1] See on the Eldership, ch. iii. p. 42. See Eng. ed. ch. vi. p. 105; do. ch. vii. pp. 128, 133. See Jameson's Cyprianus Isotinus, ch. vi. p. 505, &c. See, also, Saravia on the Priesthood.

[2] Burnet's Hist. of the Reformation, preface to the second volume of Nare's edition, pp. 24, 25.

[3] See Kingdom of Christ, p. 285, Eng. ed. Dr. Hinds' opinion in his Hist. of the Rise and Progress of Christianity, has been already given. See, also, Christianity Independent of the Civil Gov't, p. 105. Spiritual Despotism, pp. 200, 205, 208, 210, 156, 199. See Eng. ed. Warburton's Alliance of Church and State, p. 197. Mem. of Prot. Ep. Ch. p. 79.

of one profession, the clerical. That this has nothing of an *Erastian* character, it would be unnecessary to mention, but that I have seen the observation—in itself perfectly true—made in such a manner as to imply what is not true; i. e., so as to imply that some persons do, or may, maintain that there is something of Erastianism in such an arrangement. But who ever heard of any such charge being brought? Who, for instance, ever taxed the Scotch kirk, or the American Episcopalian, with being Erastian, on account of their having lay-elders? Erastianism has always been considered as consisting in making the *State*, as such—the civil *magistrate by virtue of his office*—prescribe to the people what they shall believe, and how worship God.

The Episcopal church in this country *at the time of its constitution* gave very emphatic proof of its adherence to this feature of primitive and reformed Presbyterian discipline, by adopting, *in some limited measure*, the sentiments of its founder, Bishop White, and not those of Bishop Seabury, its first corrupter, and the first in the line of succession in the order of Puseyite high-churchmen. The introduction of the laity into all their councils, Bishop White urged on the following ground:[1] From what he has read of primitive usage, he thinks it evident that in very early times, when every church, that is, the Christian people in every city and convenient district round it, was an ecclesiastical commonwealth, with all the necessary powers of self-government, the body of the people had a considerable share in its determinations. The same sanction which the people gave originally in a body, they might lawfully give by representation. In reference to very ancient practice, it would be an omission not to take notice of the council of Jerusalem, mentioned in the 15th chapter of the Acts. That the people were concerned in the transactions of that body, is granted generally by Episcopalian divines. Something has been said, indeed, to distinguish between the authoritative act of the apostles, and the concurring act of the lay brethren; and Archbishop Potter, in support of this distinction, corrects the common translation, on the authority of

[1] Memoirs of the Prot. Ep. Ch. pp. 76, 77. On what grounds Bishop Seabury opposed it may be seen at p. 344, &c., of do.

some ancient manuscripts, reading (Acts 15 : 23) "elders brethren," a similar expression, he thinks, to "men brethren," in chapter 2 : 29, where the *and* is evidently an interpolation, to suit the idiom of the English language. It does not appear, that our best commentators, either before or since the time of Archbishop Potter, have followed his reading. Mills prefers, and Griesbach rejects it. The passage, even with the corrections, amounts to what is pleaded for—the obtaining of the consent of the laity—which must have accompanied the decree of Jerusalem, nothing less being included in the term "multitude," who are said to have "kept silence;" and in that of "the whole church," of whom, as well as of the apostles and elders, it is said, that "it pleased" them to institute the recorded mission. On no other principle than that here affirmed, can there be accounted for many particulars introduced in the apostolic epistles. The matters referred to are subjects, which, on the contrary supposition, were exclusively within the province of the clergy, and not to be acted on by the churches, to whom the epistles are respectively addressed." Bishop White's views are fully developed in his "Case of the Episcopal Churches considered," and to which in the above work and to the very end of life he expressed his unshaken adherence.[1] In this work he gives the outline of a form of government, evidently suggested by the form and order of our Presbyterian courts with their clerical and lay delegates.[2] So that whatever popular representation is now enjoyed by this church, is literally and truly adopted from the Presbyterian church, which had been established long before it in this country.[3] By the veto, however, given to the bishop, and the vote by orders, which enables a majority of the clergy to outvote *all* the laity—the popular representation of the Episcopal church is but in name, and amounts to nothing in reality.

The fact is as plainly authenticated that all the Puritans from Cartwright downwards, and all the Independents until a recent

[1] See Lectures on the Apost. Succ. pp. 411, and 412, and Mem. of Prot. Ep. Ch. p. 81.

[2] See ch. ii. and quotations given in the above.

[3] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 538, &c.

date, agreed upon the same general principles, and had ruling elders in their churches.[1]

[1] See Dr. Miller, as above, where their Platforms and Confessions and standard writers are all quoted.

A large proportion, at least, of the first settlers of New England regarded the office of Ruling Elders as of Divine institution, and appealed to 1 Cor. 12 : 28, and 1 Tim. 5 : 17, as warranting this persuasion. The title of these officers is descriptive of their rank and work in the church. They were *Elders*, in common with the Pastor and Teacher: and as it was their duty to assist the teaching officers or officer in *ruling*, or conducting the spiritual affairs of the church, (in admitting, for instance, or excluding members, inspecting their lives and conversations, preventing or healing offences, visiting the sick, and administering occasionally a word of admonition or exhortation to the congregation,) they obtained the name of Ruling Elders. Whereas, Pastors and Teachers, by way of distinction, were sometimes called Teaching Elders, because it was eminently their duty to teach, or minister the word.

Ruling Elders were anciently ordained, (see Notes, Cambridge Ch.) and were sometimes addressed by the appellation of Reverend. In a letter, for instance, of Rev. Sol. Stoddard, communicating his acceptance of the call of the church at Northampton to be their pastor, the Ruling Elder, to whom it was addressed, was styled, the "Rev. John Strong," &c. The place of the Ruling Elders in the congregation was an elevated seat, between the Deacon's seat and the pulpit. They seem to have been more generally employed, and longer retained in the churches of New England, than teachers were, as distinct from Pastors. The Old South Church, Boston, for example, had never a Teacher, in the distinctive sense of the term; but at its foundation had its Ruling Elder, Mr. Rainsford, ordained at the same time with its first Pastor, Mr. Thacher. In the First Church, Boston, Ruling Elders were continued at least to the death of Elder Copp, in 1713; in York, Me., till the death of Elder Sewall, in 1769, and perhaps longer; in First Church, Ipswich, till after 1727; and in the Second Church of that town, Chebacco Parish, now Essex, till the death of Elder Crafts, in 1790. In Salem, the office was sustained for a great length of time; and can hardly be said to have yet become extinct. In the First Church in that city, which had Ruling Elders at its foundation, in 1629, choice was made of one to fill that office in 1782. In the Third Church, there was an election to the same office, then recently vacated by death in 1783. And in the North Church, which had had Ruling Elders from its beginning, the late venerable Dr. Holyoke was appointed one in 1783, and Hon. Jacob Ashton in 1826.

In the county of Middlesex, eight churches appear to have had Ruling Elders; and of these eight, two afterwards removed beyond it. In the meeting-house, in South Reading, built about 1744, there was an Elder's seat, till removed in 1837; but it is not known to have been ever occupied by the appro-

While, however, all the Reformed churches did thus agree in justifying the concurrence of the people in the government of the church, they appear evidently to have abstained from any such title as would identify their representatives even in name,

priate officer. In August, 1630, the church of Charlestown, now First Church, Boston, chose Mr. Increase Nowell as its Ruling Elder, but he resigned in 1632, after he had been elected Secretary of the Colony—it being decided incompatible to hold both offices at the same time. In the present First Church, Charlestown, there was, according to Johnson, one Ruling Elder at the time he wrote, 1651. This was doubtless Elder Green, who kept the Church Records till his death, about 1658; and he seems to have had no successor in office. Elder Brown of Watertown Church, gathered in 1630; and Elder Goodwin of the Church gathered at Cambridge, 1633, and removed to Hartford, Ct., 1636, were both prominent characters in some of the theological questions and controversies of their day.

The present First Church, Cambridge, gathered in 1636, chose Ruling Elders at the beginning, and retained them above sixty years. The Ruling Elder of First Church, Concord, gathered in 1636, is noted for the "unhappy discord" which he occasioned in that church, and the trouble which he caused the teacher, Mr. Bulkeley, which may be the reason why, after the Elder's "abdication," no successor appears to have been appointed. In First Church, Newton, Thomas Wiswall, (styled in Cambridge Town Records, Rev. Thomas Wiswall,) was ordained a Ruling Elder in 1664, at the ordination of its first pastor. And finally, in the church at Hopkinson, gathered in 1724, two Ruling Elders were ordained in 1732. But in this church, it is believed, and in all the above churches in this county, the office has long been extinct. The following is a notice of the death of a Ruling Elder, who was probably the last to sustain the office in the church of Cambridge. "Lord's day, January 14, 1699–1700. Elder Jonas Clarke of Cambridge dies; a good man in a good old age, and one of my first and best Cambridge friends. He quickly follows the great patron of Ruling Elders, Tho. Danforth, Esq.

Proposals were made in 1727, but without success, to revive the office of Ruling Elders in the Old South Church, Boston. "1727, March 31, ——— Propos'd to the Chh. to take it into yr Consideration whether the Scripture did not direct to the choice of Ruling Elders—nam'd yt text, 1 Tim. v. 17. Ld. shew us yy mind and will in ys matter." A like attempt for the same purpose was made shortly after in the New Brick Church, now Second Church, Boston. "In 1735, after much debate, it was determined to have two Ruling Elders in the church; an office which has become almost obsolete, and which after this attempt to revive it, sunk for ever." . . "This matter of the Ruling Elders was debated at numerous church meetings, from March 17, 1735 to November 11, 1737; at which time only one person (Deacon James Halsy) had been found to accept the office, and the church at last voted not to choose another." —*Am. Quarterly Register.*

with the ministers of the word. Some distinctive appellation was therefore chosen, such as "assistants," which was the term in use among the English Puritans as late as the year 1606.[1] And as the titles of bishop, pastor, and minister, came to be used as the official and regular names for preachers of the gospel, the word elder, as the translation of the Latin word *senior*, was appropriated to the representative of the people. But it was necessary to justify the office from Scripture, and as the passage in 1 Tim. 5: 17, appeared, when translated by the term *elders* instead of *presbyters*, to designate two kinds of elders, the term *ruling elder* came to be very generally used as an appropriate title for these assistants or seniors. Nor do we now object to the name, inasmuch as both the word *elder* and the word *ruling* are now understood only in their adopted and conventional meaning, and not in their Scriptural and derivative sense. The term *elder* is grave and honorable, and well suited to express the character and estimation in which its possessor should be held; while the epithet *ruling* as happily denotes the duty to which he is appointed. But when we refer to the passage *on which the name is founded*, and by which it is sustained, nothing could be more unfortunate than such an appropriation of its terms. For as we have seen, the one word πρεσβυτεροι, i. e. *presbyters*, is never used in the New Testament, or in the fathers, for any other officer than the one who might preach and administer sacraments; while the other term προεστως (*proestos*), i. e. *presiding*, alludes to an official duty in the public congregation, to which the ruling elder has never been deemed competent. And it is therefore our opinion that had this passage been rendered as it ought to be in accordance with the usage of Scrip-

[1] About the year 1606, Mr. Bradshaw published a small treatise, entitled, "English Puritanism, containing the main opinions of the rigidest sort of those that went by that name in the realm of England," which Dr. Ames translated into Latin for the benefit of foreigners. As to government, this treatise says, "They hold that by God's ordinance the congregation should choose other officers as ASSISTANTS to the ministers in the government of the church, who are jointly, with the ministers, the overseers of the manners and conversation of all the congregation, and that these are to be chosen out of the gravest and most discreet members, who are also of some note in the world, and able, if possible, to maintain themselves." *Neal*, vol. i. p. 434.

ture—"Let the presbyters who preside" over fixed and organized churches, and minister to them in word and doctrine, "be counted worthy of double honor, but especially those presbyters who act as evangelists," in carrying that "word and doctrine" into frontier and destitute regions,—the use of the title "ruling elder" in its present sense, never would have been suggested, and all the confusion and obscurity which have been thrown around the question of the nature and duties of the office for ever prevented.

CHAPTER V.

On the permanency of the office of Ruling Elder.

The Parmasim, or lay senate in the synagogue, whose authority and office is, in some respects, similar to that of the session, hold their office but for one year, being annually chosen by the free voice of the people.[1] The sidesmen and other lay representatives of the people in the ancient British churches, were also, as we have seen, temporary officers. Such also were they who were anciently admitted to sit in councils. And when the reformers revived and reëstablished the order of the church courts, presbyteries, synods, and assemblies, with lay representatives as component members of them all, these officers were, in all cases, of a temporary character, and reëlected from year to year. Such was the case in Geneva,[2] and such continues to be the case in that church until the present time.[3] Such was the case also in Scotland during the continuance of the Book of Common Order, and the First Book of Discipline. The same plan was adopted by all the Reformed churches on the continent; in some cases the election of elders being annual, and in others for a longer period.[4]

This plan, however, has been disapproved by our own church, which has stamped the same perpetuity and sacredness

[1] Bernard's Synagogue, p. 38.

[2] The Laws and Statutes of Geneva, p. 6.

[3] Heugh's Religion in Geneva and Belgium, pp. 10, 11.

[4] Dr. Miller on the office of Ruling Elder, 1844, p. 118. De Moor's Comment. Perpet. tom. vi. p. 330, and Spanheim, ibid.

upon the office of ruling elder which it attaches to the ministry. It pronounces it to be "perpetual, and not to be laid aside at pleasure," and that "no person can be divested of it but by deposition." Now against this arrangement we contend, and to this language also we object, and the order here laid down we believe to be inexpedient, and unscriptural in its character and injurious in its results.

This order is unscriptural. There is no warrant, either in Scripture precept, apostolic practice, or primitive usage, for such an arrangement. THE BRETHREN who sat in the council of Jerusalem, "the helps and the governments," and the lay-officers of the early churches, were, as far as we can gather from what is said in Scripture, and from the policy of the synagogue, temporary. Nor have we seen any thing in the history of the church to countenance the opposite opinion. A perpetual eldership is also contrary to the very principle upon which the Reformers based its authority, namely, the truth that (as Luther words it) "ALL Christians belong to the spiritual state," and have an inherent and unalienable right to coöperate in the government of the church, and to hold ecclesiastical offices. The Christian laity, therefore, as God's "*clergy*," are to exercise their liberty, under a sense of responsibility to Christ, and in accordance with the rules of his word, in choosing their own pastors, and in electing and in appointing their own representatives. The church is a spiritual commonwealth, and all its officers, while their office, dignity, and rights are sacred by divine appointment, are chosen by the church, are responsible to the church, and may, and ought to be removable from office by the church, acting through its properly constituted organs. Especially and preëminently ought this to be the case with "ruling elders," which are, as our standards teach, "*properly* the representatives of the people, chosen by them." Now by attaching inviolability and permanency to the office, this character and object of the office is practically destroyed, since the great body of any church may, and often do live and die without having any opportunity to "choose representatives," and this too, even while they may feel very sensibly that they are misrepresented by the existing elders, and that the government and discipline of the

church is altogether neglected or abused by them. The liberty and birthright of the Christian people are thus seriously curtailed, and their rights of spiritual citizenship practically abrogated and annulled. The republican and representative character of the church is in this way denied. The free, open, and popular design of our institutions, is also exchanged for a close corporation which cannot be changed, and which, at the same time, can perpetuate itself. Christian freemen, therefore, have a right from time to time to express their opinion in a Christian spirit, and under the direction of Christian rules, of their delegated representatives; and either to continue or to displace those who may have been found inefficient or unworthy.

But it may be said that these objections will apply equally to the ministers who, though elected by the people, are not removable by them, at pleasure. But we think differently. For, *practically*, the people *can* remove their minister and secure the services of one under whom they may be more benefited. And as ministers are not the officers of any one church, nor limited to any one territory, they can still continue in their office; and while objectionable to one particular church, still discharge the functions of the ministry to the spiritual benefit of others. But the ruling elder is the officer only of that church by which he has been elected, and he *is* fixed and permanent in his residence and location. And therefore, in his case there is a perfect contrast to the condition of the minister, since he is necessitated to retain his office when no longer fit for it or acceptable in it, and, since the people are required to regard and treat as an elder the man who has no longer any claims on account of any duties he can render, (or it may be, he ever has rendered) to either their respect or their gratitude. This case, therefore, is perfectly anomalous and unreasonable.[1]

And where, we again ask, does Scripture warrant the prelatical notion that there is an inviolable and immutable sacredness, or *something*, attached to "*the office*" of a ruling elder

[1] In the Reformed Churches of France, (see Form of Discipline, Can. xi. in Quick's Synodicon, vol. i. p. 19,) the ministry was declared to be for life, "*unless* they be lawfully discharged upon good and certain conditions."

apart from the *officer* himself?[1] What is the nature of this mysterious abstraction? Where does this invisible grace reside?—and *when*—*where*—and *how*—is it imparted? Where does Scripture teach us that a man may be incapable of holding an ecclesiastical office, and of discharging any of its duties, and yet that his office is nevertheless perpetual and cannot be laid aside? Surely we may search Scripture in vain for any such *quiddity* as this, which clothes its possessor with a secret charm and character, like our civil dignitaries of *Colonel* and of *General*, which the service of a single month may wreath around the brows of their honorable possessors for a long lifetime. Oh yes, we must go elsewhere among the misty and smoky closets of mediæval casuistry, to discover the true original source of this wonderful grace; and it ill becomes those who scout the whole assumption as the baseless fabric of a vision, and the concerted legend of monkish mysticism, to authenticate the truth of the dogma, and practically exhibit to the world such inexcusable inconsistency.

Nor is this arrangement less inexpedient than it is unscriptural. No man "can be divested of the office of elder but by deposition," and yet "he may become through age or infirmity incapable of discharging the duties of his office," and "from any other cause incapable of serving the church to edification!" Can such an arrangement as this be proper, becoming, edifying, or desirable? What is gained? We can see nothing but that indescribable and undiscernible *something* or *nothing* of which we have spoken. And what is hazarded and lost? Much, every way. The dignity and high character of the office is lost; for this consists not in any ecclesiastical appointment, but in the respect, confidence, and affection of the people. And how can they cherish such feelings towards those in whose election the great majority have had no choice; over whose continuance they have none of them any power or check or control; and whom they have not even the privilege of requesting from time to time to continue to render to them their duly estimated services? How poor is the encouragement, and how cheerless the reflec-

[1] When it was declared that ordination to ecclesiastical office "imprimit characterem indelibilem," may be seen in Binius, tom. viii. p. 425, and Mourius De Sacris Eccl. Ordinibus, passim.

tions of a ruling elder who has no evidence of the free and hearty good will of his constituents, compared with the man who is urged to continue in his office from time to time by the approving votes of his respected brethren! The minister has this high, inspiriting, and ennobling feeling, for he knows that by the continued kindness and reciprocated feelings of his people, he is useful and honored by them, and esteemed very highly in love for his work's sake; and when he perceives that it is otherwise, he can seek some other field, where God may open to him a wide and effectual door.

By our present arrangement, the motives to zeal and usefulness in the work of the eldership are, in a great degree, destroyed. The elected elder, being no longer directly responsible to the people, or dependent upon them for continuance in office, is led by all the evil tendencies of our corrupt nature, to fold his arms in indolence, to sit down and take his ease in Zion, and to do no more than his convenience or absolute necessity requires. We appeal to the state of our church sessions every where for illustrations of this melancholy truth, and we allege the very common (though thank God by no means universal) inefficiency and inactivity of the eldership, and their unwillingness to enter upon any field of self-denying Christian effort, as lamentable proof of the truth of our position. But were elders elected for a time, and made reëligible to office, the office would at once rise in its practical interest and importance; the minds of the people would be more frequently directed towards it; and the minds of the elders more constantly directed towards the interests of the people, and thus be led, under the impulse of every high and stimulating principle, to be steadfast and immovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord.

By the present arrangement we lose also the power of rectifying mistakes in judgment, and of removing from the office of the eldership men who have committed no crime which can be clearly proved against them, or even charged upon them, and who may be in the judgment of charity regarded as pious, and yet who have proved themselves unfit for the acceptable discharge of the office by their imprudence, their inert inefficiency, their want of gifts, their growing coldness and

formality, their neglect of the Sabbath and week day services of the sanctuary, or from any other cause. As it now is, such men, and often too with the greatest tenacity, hang like mill-stones about the neck of a church; form prominent stumbling blocks in the way of sinners; and act like a drag upon the wheels of the church, in every attempt at spiritual and benevolent enterprise.

By the present arrangement also we lose the services of many of the very best and most capable members of our church, who would, under an opposite arrangement, be found ready to enter upon the office of the eldership. As it is, they are so engrossed with necessary engagements, or so diffident and modest, or so affrighted by the prospect of a life of engagement, and by the mysterious awe which is made to surround the very character of "*the office*"—or so reluctant to enter into a *permanent* association with the existing members of the session, as to be unwilling to enter upon its discharge at all. The consequence is, that in some cases the least capable are the most certain to be inducted to this office, because they alone, perhaps, can be induced to accept of the office. And thus, it is sometimes seen, that the man who cannot or does not manage properly his own business, or his own family, and who is as unstable as water, is set up to manage the affairs of Christ's household, and to sit as a prince upon the throne of spiritual judgment. But were the office temporary, say biennial or triennial, the persons we have described could be induced to make trial of their gifts and of their fitness for the work, and if found acceptable and useful, be encouraged to continue their zealous and valuable services, and to lend their name, their character, and their example, to the moral influence and power of the session.

Neither can it be said that the corruptions of the Genevan, French, or any other Reformed churches, have resulted from the temporary nature of this office. There is nothing to warrant such an inference, any more than the inference of prelatists and Romanists from the same facts, against our doctrines and order generally. No! the evil in these churches lay in allowing these officers to be appointed by *the State*, and to be therefore men of whose protestantism and genuine piety there was no evi-

dence either sought or given;—and from excluding them altogether from the supreme councils of the church. It was this *Erastian* character of the Reformed churches—their alliance with the State, their adaptation to the civil constitution, their consequent tendency to seek for worldly honor, respectability, and favor; their neglect to establish and enforce discipline altogether, or their procrastination until its effective administration became impossible,[1] and the necessary withholdment and gradual corruption of the doctrines of the gospel—these were the true sources of this lamentable decay. And had the spiritual qualifications of their eldership been enforced, and their election retained in the hands of the members of the church; had they been admitted upon credible evidence of their piety, and the efficiency of church discipline been sustained; then, and in that case, we think the temporary character of the office would have given life, and zeal, and continued energy to the church.

[1] See a most affecting and learned exhibition of this truth by Comenius in his Exhortation to the Churches of Bohemia, and to the Churches of England. London, 1661, 4to.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the Ordination of Ruling Elders by imposition of hands; and their coöperation in ordination.

The determination of both these questions depends in a great degree, as a matter of right and propriety, upon the questions already considered—and as the office of the eldership has been invariably regarded as temporary in its character until comparatively recent times, and still is so in the largest part of Reformed Christendom, and in the private judgment of a growing number even within those churches which have made it permanent,—the inference seems plain that the weight of opinion is against the propriety of ordaining them by imposition of hands. The fact therefore is, that they never have been so ordained except in this country, where the practice, though not sanctioned by our Standards, has been introduced by Dr. Miller, in accordance with his view of the nature and origin of the office. The same writer consulted by Dr. Miller, and already quoted, says :[1] "On this point the evidence I think is equally clear that ruling elders were *not then*, and *never have been* set apart to their office by imposition of hands." In a treatise formerly mentioned, Alexander Henderson, when treating of elders and deacons, says,—"When the day of their admission cometh, the pastor having framed his doctrine to the purpose, calleth them up and remembering both them of their duty in their charge, and the people of their submitting

[1] Office of the Ruling Elder, p. 134. See, also, The Divine Right of Ch. Gov't, p. 270, Quick's Synodicon, vol. i. p. 229.

themselves unto them, they are solemnly received with lifted up hands, giving their promise to be faithful." Mr. James Guthrie in his treatise says, "Their admission is to be by the minister of the congregation, or one appointed by the presbytery, in the presence of the whole congregation, with the preaching of the word," &c. On this subject Dr. Miller himself is very candid. "And yet," says he,[1] "nothing is more certain than that, since the Reformation from Popery, when the use of this office was almost universally revived, the mode of conducting its investiture by the imposition of hands *has been almost every where omitted.* When this formality began to be omitted, and for what reason, are questions for the solution of which we do not possess definite information. What the practice of the Waldenses, and other pious witnesses of the truth during the dark ages, who uniformly maintained the office of Ruling Elder, during all their hardships and persecutions, was, cannot now, so far as I know, be certainly determined." At what period in the history of the Church of Scotland it was that the annual election of elders was laid aside and the office made permanent, is not with absolute certainty known. The Rev. Mr. Lorimer, in his late valuable treatise on the Eldership in the Church of Scotland, supposes it to have been about the year 1642, a short time before the meeting of the Westminster Assembly. But so great was the force of habit, that notwithstanding this change in the tenure of the office, the old method of ordination has been continued in Scotland to this day, and was brought by our fathers to this country, where it continued without change until 1809, when *for the first time* it is believed, *in the Presbyterian world*, the practice of laying on hands in the ordination of elders was introduced, but has not yet become general in our church; and so far as the present writer knows, is entirely confined to the United States.

If, therefore, ruling elders never have been ordained by imposition of hands, and the tenure of the office has been so universally temporary, how can it enter into the heart of any man to conceive that they could properly impose hands in the ordination

[1] Office of the Ruling Elder, p. 114.

of ministers? This is one of Baxter's arguments: "And how came they," says he, "to have power to ordain others," as the Independents, against whom he reasons, alleged, "and are not ordained themselves, but are admitted upon bare election?"[1] The evidence on this subject drawn from Scripture and the testimony of the fathers and reformers has been already given at length, and is, we think, sufficient to prove that they confined the terms bishop and presbyter, at least in their strict and official character as titles of office, to the pastor; and that they also *limited to them* the power of ordination as well as of preaching, administering sacraments, and presiding in the church and in its councils. We will only therefore add in this place one or two additional testimonies which have occurred to us in our reading.

Calderwood in his "Pastor and Prelate," published in 1628, says,[2] "The Pastor findeth it to be so far against the word of God to claim any authority over his brethren, that albeit there be a divine order in the Kirk, whereby there is one kind of ministry, both ordinary and extraordinary, in degree and dignity before another, as the apostle before all others, the pastor before the elder and deacon, yet he can find no minister, ordinary or extraordinary, that hath any majority of power over other inferior ministers of another kind,—as the pastor over the elder and deacon, far less over other ministers of the same kind, as the pastor or bishop over the pastor.[3]

"THE PASTOR with his fellow presbyters, as he is put in trust with the preaching of the word and ministration of the sacraments, HATH RECEIVED ALSO OF CHRIST THE POWER OF ORDINATION OF PASTORS, where presbytery,[4] never used in the New

[1] Dissert. on Ch. Gov't, p. 167.

[2] The First Part, §§ 6 and 8.

[3] By Scripture, no apostle hath power over another apostle, nor evangelist over another evangelist, nor elder over another elder, nor deacon over another deacon; but all are equal.

[4] 1 Tim. 4: 14. Neither doth the apostle deny that to presbyters which he did himself with them, and which he ascribeth to Timothy. 1 Tim. 5: 22. 2 Tim. 1: 6. Neither the prelate himself denieth the power of ordination to the presbyter, but the exercise of the power which he arrogateth to himself. Ordinat. Deus per ecclesiam, ordinat. ecclesia per presbyterium per episcopos, et pastores suos; singuli conferunt in unum quae sua sunt.—Jun. animad. 1187.

Testament to signify the office of priesthood or order of a presbyter, can be no other thing but the persons or company of pastors laying on their hands, and that not only for consent, but for consecration, of which number any one may pronounce the words of blessing. We will now introduce a quotation which will be at the same time an argument. It is from that celebrated work, "Jus Divinum Ministerii Evangelici," written by "the Provincial Assembly of London" in the year 1654, and directed principally against the Independents. They ask,[1] "What part hath the Ruling Elder in ordination? Supposing that there is such an officer in the church, (for the proof of which we refer the reader to our vindication,) we answer that the power of *ordering* of the whole work of ordination belongs to the whole presbytery, that is, to the teaching and ruling Elders. But imposition of hands is to be always by preaching presbyters, and the rather because it is accompanied with prayer and exhortation, both before, in, and after, which is the proper work of the teaching Elder;" and in Part Second they argue this question still more at length.[2]

We might multiply quotations, but cannot avoid presenting one other. It is from a very curious and able work by the Rev. Thomas Ball, "sometime fellow of Emmanuel College in Cambridge, now minister of the gospel in Northampton, at the request and by the advice of very many of his neighbor ministers," entitled "Pastorum Propugnaculum, or the Pulpit's Patronage against the force of unordained usurpation and invasion," printed at London in 1656. After discussing at length the nature of ordination, and who should administer it, he adds,[3] "They should be 'head officers;' Paul was a head officer, yet hath a hand in Timothy's ordination, as we have showed before. The lowest that we read of were prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch; in that Presbytery that Paul speaks of, it is very like there were Apostles; for Peter, none of the meanest, thinks not himself

[1] Part I. p. 182.
[2] Part II. pp. 96–98.
[3] Lond. 4to. pp. 344. See p. 234, 235.

too good to be a Presbyter—'The elders which are among you, I exhort, who am also an elder'—that is, a Presbyter, and it is no wonder that the highest did attend it, for it is the highest work, a consecrating or devoting one unto the highest honor and employment in the church, the matching and espousing one to Jesus Christ, the putting of one's hand unto the plow, from which he never must look back again; that there are orders and degrees of officers appears, because the well using of the office of a deacon was to procure to himself a good degree or step unto another place, as the Apostle speaks; and the Apostles were the first or highest order or degree, as appears from that enumeration that is set down, yet they think not themselves too good to ordain the meanest officer, for so the deacons always were accounted, and that in a busy time, when they had renounced secular employments, as below them, and confined themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word. So Paul and Barnabas were the great apostles of the Gentiles, yet thought it not enough to preach the Gospel and convert men to the truth, but did also carefully ordain them elders in every church; good people therefore must not think much to leave *this unto preaching elders that was never practised by any of God's people, either in the Scripture or after ages of the church,* and which is really above their sphere, even a great deal more than they can manage, or tell how to wield, and be content those should perform it, that are by God deputed thereunto."

Thus much we have added on this question in this place, by way of supplement to the previous discussion, in which it is more fully considered. If in Scripture and the Fathers the terms presbyter and bishop are limited in their official sense to preachers, and if such alone united in the act of ordination, as has we think been made apparent, then, of course, there can be no question as to the right of ruling elders to *ordain.* And if the practice of reformed churches, including our own, have been invariably opposed to such a practice, there can be as little question as to the *expediency or propriety* of introducing such an innovation into the order of our church. We cannot therefore but hope that a question so fruitless and unprofitable

will be allowed to rest, and that the energies of the church will be devoted to the upbuilding of her waste places and the extension of the kingdom of Christ.[1]

[1] Brown in his Vindication of the Presbyterian Form of Church Gov't, Edinb. 1812, 2d ed., occupies from p. 64 to p. 66, and again at pp. 188, 169, in proving that "ministers alone can ordain ministers," and he shows that this was admitted by many Independents.

CHAPTER VII.

The Value of the Eldership.

It may be profitable before bringing this work to a close to illustrate the value of the Eldership.

There are two dangerous extremes, between which, as some destructive Scylla and Charybdis, the church of God has pursued her hazardous and ofttimes fatal course. To these we will first advert.

The first of these extremes is the undue exaltation and power of the Christian ministry, which leads to spiritual despotism, and terminates in consequent corruption.

The love of power and domination is one of the most strongly manifested principles of man's fallen nature, and stands out most prominently in the blood-stained history of our apostate race. Equally certain is it that those elements in human nature which constitute man a religious being, and which bind him over to the unalterable destinies of a future and unseen world, are the most sure and effectual means by which such spiritual power can be established and upheld. Hence it is that the chief influence and sway over the minds and consciences of men has ever been exerted by the priesthood. And just as the character of religious teachers has been pure, elevated, and noble, or corrupt and debased, has their power been found to work out the degradation or the welfare of society.

The teaching of the doctrines, and the administration of the ordinances and discipline of the Christian church have been intrusted, by its divine Head, to an order of men who constitute the ministers of the sanctuary. And, while human sagacity and

care must ever be insufficient to prevent the entrance of unholy and unworthy persons into this sacred office, it is also certain that even in those who are truly Christian the natural love of power may exert its influence, under the assumed pretext of a just and necessary zeal for the honor and glory of God. From both these causes it was early found that the Christian ministry, at least to some considerable extent, arrogated to itself an undue authority in the church; claimed the possession of all heavenly gifts, so as that these could not be received except through their hands; and separated the clergy from the laity by a high wall of mysterious sanctity; until at length the laity were excluded from all interference with ecclesiastical arrangements, and were taught to look with implicit faith and reverence to these spiritual depositories of heavenly grace, for all saving and divine communications.

Such an exclusive management of the whole business of the church would, of course, insensibly lead its ministers to introduce rites, ceremonies, and doctrines adapted to secure the establishment of these spiritual claims. For this purpose it was taught that the gifts and graces of God were vested as a sacred deposit in the ministry, and were only to be obtained through their instrumentality. For this purpose were the people made to believe that sins committed after baptism were scarcely, if at all, remissible, and that when remitted it was only through the penances prescribed by these priestly mediators. For this purpose was the cup withheld from the laity, and the Lord's Supper changed into the idolatrous service of the mass. For this purpose were auricular confession, pilgrimages, indulgences, consecration of places and of utensils, and all the other forms, rites, and ceremonies, which have been from time to time adopted, made of primary and indispensable importance. By these and similar methods was the ministry exalted and the laity humbled; the former clothed with the prerogatives of God, and the latter despoiled of the rights and immunities secured to them by Christ. Spiritual despotism being thus established, the corruption of the entire system of the gospel was a necessary and unavoidable consequence, since in its purity it asserts the liberty of its disciples, emancipates them from the yoke of servility to their

fellow men, and introduces them into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Now this system of iniquity yet works, and the principles which lead to it are, and ever will be, common to every inheritor of our fallen humanity. Christian ministers now are, by nature, what they ever were and ever must be, weak, erring, sinful, and fallible mortals. The *tendency* of this corrupt nature would of itself lead them to the assumption of undue power, and of unauthorized prerogatives, and to the consequent perversion to their own carnal purposes and professional aggrandizement, of the oracles of God.

How admirable, therefore, is the wisdom of God in providing a counteracting agency in the people, and in their delegated representatives, the Christian Eldership, by which the approaches of this spiritual tyranny may be checked, and the first inroad of heresy stayed. These are representatives *of the people*, chosen and delegated *by the people*, and not by the ministry. Ruling elders are in constant and familiar intercourse with the people. They are, or ought to be, numerous. They are independent of the clergy. They can carry an appeal from their decisions to all the appointed judicatories of the church. And thus, if they are in any good measure faithful men, they may effectually guard *the members* of the church from the possibility of all ecclesiastical tyranny; and *the doctrines* of the church from all ecclesiastical perversion by a wily, selfish, ambitious, unconverted, or heretical clergy.

"Wherefore," says Hilary or Ambrose, in the Commentary usually attributed to him, (on 1 Tim. 5: 1,) "both the synagogue and afterwards the church had seniors, without whose counsel nothing was done in the church; which order, by what negligence it grew into disuse I know not, unless perhaps by the sloth, or rather by the pride of the teachers, while they alone wish to appear something." Nothing, therefore, has been more violently resented by High Church prelatists of every age than this interference of the laity with what they arrogantly claim as their sole and exclusive jurisdiction. The eldership has consequently been declaimed against as an "inquisitorial court not to

be endured,"[1] and at this very moment is it boldly declared by the divines of Oxford that the admission of the laity in any form into the ecclesiastical assemblies of the American Episcopal church, is a manifest usurpation which must be overthrown.[2]

In the early ages of the church the right of the people to a participation in the government of the church was, as we have seen, never questioned. They voted for their pastors even as they do in Presbyterian churches now, and were summoned together whenever the election of a Bishop became necessary.[3] Thus in the year A. D. 448, as Bede informs us, Germanus and Lupus were sent from France into England to suppress the Pelagian heresy. A synod or council was summoned at Verolam, (St. Albans,) in which the people, the laity as well as the clergy, had decisive votes in determining points of doctrine.[4] "The ancient method," says Burns, "was not only for the clergy but the body of the people within such a district to appear at synods, of whom a certain number were selected to give information, while four, six, or eight delegates, according to the extent of the parish, represented the rest, and sat with the clergy as testes synodates."[5]

It was from a conviction of these truths, and from a belief that such officers were absolutely necessary to withstand those excesses of tyranny practised by the Romish clergy at and before the period of the Reformation, that Calvin in 1542 revived these rules in the Christian church at Geneva, as they had been already elsewhere.[6]

Since then it appears that when the usurping power of prelatical ambition ruled over God's heritage, this office, which gave an interposing authority to the people, was discontinued; and that when the church was roused by the Spirit of God to throw off that spiritual despotism, she found it necessary to

[1] Whitgift's Defence, Soames, Eliz. Rel. Hist.

[2] See British Critic, as fully quoted in my Lectures on the Apost. Succes. pp. 309–312.

[3] See Clarkson's Primitive Episcopacy.

[4] Eccl. Hist. lib. i. c. 17, in Bib. Repert. 1837, p. 15.

[5] Burns' Eccl. Law, vol. i. p. 408.

[6] See Brown on Ch. Gov't, p. 126.

summon to her aid these divinely authorized officers; and since the same tendency to undue and arbitrary authority is *native* to corrupt humanity, and will therefore ever manifest itself, the value and importance to be attached to the office of the Christian Eldership must be at once apparent.

Such has ever been its influence in the reformed Kirk of Scotland; so that when the Book of Canons was sent to Scotland in 1635, by authority of King Charles, but in reality through the influence of Archbishop Laud, it constituted one chief item in the list of grievances against which the nation boldly protested, that thereby "lay-elders were rejected."[1] And it will be manifest to every attentive reader of the history of the Church of Scotland, that both at the period of her first and second reformation, it was only by the bold, uncompromising, and steadfast adherence to the cause of covenanted truth, by the representatives of the laity, the cause of reform was maintained against the combined power of Erastian plunderers and Romish plotters; and that but for their resolute and persevering stand, the cause of Presbyterianism would have been in some cases sold into the hands of powerful rulers.[2]

To the elders, in connexion with the pastor, is committed the authoritative administration of the discipline of the church, both as a preservative against error, and also against immorality; and the purity or impurity, the prosperity or adversity of the church since the Reformation will be found to coincide with the degree of their faithfulness or unfaithfulness in the exercise of this double spiritual power.

When General and Provincial Assemblies were suppressed in Scotland, and presbyteries neglected, ministers became negligent, immorality and heresy prevailed, and Popery increased.[3] And the present lamentable condition of the church in Germany, where infidel and unchristian tenets have been substituted for the pure word of God, is also traceable to the deficient constitutions of the German churches, their entire want of control over the opinions of their own ministers, and their wild licentious exercise of the right of private judgment on every question, however

[1] See Life of Henderson by Dr. Aiton.

[2] See do. do. pp. 311, 312, 317, 322, &c.

[3] Ibid. p. 157.

mysterious and momentous.[1] These evils have been so strongly felt, and their cause so clearly discerned, that measures are in progress for the establishment of a more efficient church government and discipline. Not only is this true of the continental church generally—it is most lamentably exemplified in the church in Geneva, where the worldly character of the elders, and their exclusion from the highest ecclesiastical court, which is composed of clergymen merely, have enabled unprincipled men gradually and most insidiously to supplant with Socinian formularies all the existing standards of the church.[2]

So, also, in England, the lax discipline, and the imperfect constitution of the Old Presbyterian churches (for Presbyterianism never was fully carried out in that country, and therefore never could exert its full efficiency) gave occasion to the corruption of doctrine and the degeneracy of piety.

"It is of the very greatest importance," says the Rev. Mr. Thomson, in the Scottish Christian Herald, "to ascertain the causes of this remarkable and deplorable decline of Presbyterianism. The grinding persecutions to which Presbyterians were subjected by Cromwell, an Independent, and by the faithless Episcopalians, under the Stuarts, prevented them from erecting the platform of their scriptural polity, and familiarized many to the more attainable, plastic, and accommodating institutions of Congregationalism.

"Presbyterians began to look upon forms of church government as not of Divine institution; they regarded them as merely human expedients for the preservation of order; and that, therefore, a church might be just as rightly constituted under one form as under another; they talked, indeed, of Episcopalianism's being adapted to rich and gorgeous England, and of Presbyterianism's being adapted to poor and homely Scotland. The necessary consequence of this miserable delusion was, that the strictness of discipline gave way; Presbyterianism came to be branded as stiff, rigid, puritanical and unaccommodating; and numbers of the churches lapsed into Independency, and thence sank into Soci-

[1] See Rose on, in Bib. Repert. 1826, pp. 405 and 449.

[2] See Dr. Heugh's Religion in Geneva and Belgium.

nianism. By many churches which did not go the whole length of this declension, alliances and agreements were entered into with Congregationalists, which but opened a door for admission into the congregations of the more acceptable doctrines of the latter, who broke the pactions as soon as they saw that this purpose had been sufficiently served. Seldom were pains taken any where to instruct the people in the counsel of God, respecting the form and government of the church. Every thing relating to such matters was rather, indeed, studiously kept out of sight. The result was inevitable—the people became ignorant of the subject, and as indifferent to it as they were ignorant of it. The consequence was, that the framework of Presbyterianism was, in many places, gradually and utterly dissolved; and congregation after congregation passed into other communions without even an effort being made to retain them."

Seeing, therefore, that if true doctrine and true piety are left to the care and preservation of the clergy *merely*, they will as certainly be in time corrupted;[1] and that under God the life of the church is maintained by a faithful discipline and control; the importance of a Christian eldership, who shall act as overseers of the flock, and as helps and governments, cannot be too highly estimated. They are guardians of the spiritual liberties and the religious freedom of the people. They are set for the defence and preservation of the truth, not by its inculcation from the sacred desk, but by the preservation of that desk itself from the intrusion of erroneous and unsound teachers.[2]

"That there has never been any open and avowed departure from Calvinistic doctrines in the Presbyterian church in the United States," says Dr. Hodge in his Constitutional History, "while repeated and extended defections have occurred in New England, is a fact worthy of special consideration. The cause of this remarkable difference in the history of these two portions of the

[1] That heresies have generally originated with aspiring clergymen, see Faber's Albigenses, p. 567. And that they have generally been opposed to all reformation of abuses, see Conder's View of all Religions, p. 78; Neal's Hist. vol. iv. p. vii. 429; Burnet's Hist. of Ref. vol. i. p. xvi., xxi.

[2] On the Influence of Elders and the Laity, in checking error, see Bib. Repertory, 1837, p. 15, 17.

church, may be sought by different persons in different circumstances. Presbyterians may be excused if they regard their form of government as one of the most important of those causes. New England has enjoyed greater religious advantages than any other portion of our country. It was settled by educated and devoted men. Its population was homogeneous and compact. The people were almost all of the same religious persuasion. The Presbyterian church, on the contrary, has labored under great disadvantages. Its members were scattered here and there, in the midst of other denominations. Its congregations were widely separated, and, owing to the sparseness of the people, often very feeble; and, moreover, not unfrequently composed of discordant materials, Irish, Scotch, German, French, and English. Yet doctrinal purity has been preserved to a far greater extent in the latter denomination than in the former. What is the reason? Is it not to be sought in the conservative influence of Presbyterianism? The distinguished advantages possessed by New England, have produced their legitimate effects. It would be not less strange than lamentable, had the institutions, instructions, and example of the pious founders of New England been of no benefit to their descendants. It is to these sources that portion of our country is indebted for its general superiority. The obvious decline in the religious character of the people, and the extensive prevalence, at different periods, of fanaticism and Antinomianism, Arminianism and Pelagianism, is, as we believe, to be mainly attributed to an unhappy and unscriptural ecclesiastical organization. Had New England, with her compact and homogeneous population, and all her other advantages, enjoyed the benefit of a regular Presbyterian government in the church, it would, in all human probability, have been the finest ecclesiastical community in the world.

"It is well known that a great majority of all the distinguished ministers whom New England has produced, have entertained the opinion here expressed on the subject. President Edwards, for example, in a letter to Mr. Erskine, said, 'I have long been out of conceit of our unsettled, independent, confused way of church government; and the Presbyterian way has ever appeared to me most agreeable to the word of God, and the reason and

nature of things.' Life, p. 412. Where the preservation of the purity of the church is committed to the mass of the people, who, as a general rule, are incompetent to judge in doctrinal matters, and who, in many cases, are little under the influence of true religion, we need not wonder that corruption should from time to time prevail. As Christ has appointed presbyters to rule in the church according to his word, on them devolve the duty and responsibility of maintaining the truth. This charge is safest in the hands of those to whom Christ has assigned it."

But there is also another extreme to which the church may be driven, and which is followed by consequences equally dangerous and destructive, and that is the undue influence and interference of the people. There may be a spiritual democracy as well as a spiritual despotism—a spiritual anarchy and wild misrule, as well as an arbitrary exercise of spiritual and ministerial authority. For if ministers, with all their knowledge, their motives to piety, and their solemn obligations to preserve and perpetuate the truth, are often found insufficient to withstand the temptations to self-aggrandizement, how much less are the mass of any congregation or church qualified for the exercise of power and the discernment of truth? The *many* will always be guided by the *few*, and will implicitly follow their direction; while these will be swayed in their determinations by party spirit, prejudice, or personal animosity. When all are judges and rulers, and all have equal voice and authority, tyranny and misrule must necessarily, in the very nature of things, be the result.

The principle of representation on which the power of government and control is delegated by the many to the few, is therefore found to be of essential importance in all social and political bodies. The ultimate power being in the mass, its present exercise is committed to appointed officers.

Now this principle God has sanctioned in the church, where all authority and power, though vested not in the people generally, is to be exercised by officers chosen by, and from among, the people. An order of ministers, also, are empowered with the exclusive office and authority of preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments, ordained by previously existing ministers, and then elected by the people. And as salvation is made

to depend upon the preaching and hearing of the truth; and since the power of the truth depends upon the purity and fidelity with which it is proclaimed, it is clearly as necessary that the ministry should be upheld and maintained in the exercise of all proper independence and authority, that it may be under no overbearing influence through fear of the hatred, or desire of the favor of the people, as that the rights of the people should be guarded against the encroachments of spiritual tyranny. All order, discipline, and jurisdiction are as likely to be overthrown, and the truth of God as likely to be perverted and made to adapt itself to the taste of man, where they are subject to the domineering caprices of the multitude, as when left to the exclusive management of a single individual.[1]

The Christian eldership, therefore, is of great value and importance, when viewed as the guardian of the just rights and necessary authority of the ministry, and as a check to the capricious and unauthorized interference of the people, or of any aspiring individuals among the people. Anarchy and wild misrule are as dangerous as despotism; and the way of safety lies in that happy medium which preserves authority within its just and proper limits, and secures obedience to all the rightful demands of lawful officers. The eldership is thus the balance-weight between the ministry and the people, by which they are kept in a happy equilibrium; appointed by the people, and yet acting with the pastor; representatives of the people, but bound over to solemn fidelity to all the interests of the church; and numerous, that they may the better supply all the necessities which demand their care, and the better guard against whatever influence might be exerted to introduce disorder or corruption into the bosom of the church.

"Presbyterianism," says the author already quoted, "though, no doubt, adapted to human nature, as every Divine institution unquestionably must be, is yet not a form of church government which men will naturally choose. It is adapted to reform, not to please human nature. There is in it both too much and too little of

[1] As illustrative of the anarchy which must result from the exercise of spiritual powers by the people, see Div. Right of Ch. Gov't, pp. 111 and 114.

governmental character, too much and too little of distinction of order, too much of ruling required, and yet too little power conferred upon the rulers, ever to render it generally, much less universally, palatable. Those who love power will naturally prefer prelacy. Presbyterianism, by placing all the pastors of the church on the same level, and by forbidding them to be lords, in any sense, over God's heritage, affords no scope to clerical pride or ambition on the one hand, or to the indulgence of a servile, inert, implicitly confiding submission on the other. By associating churches, and placing the government of them, not in the hands of one individual, but in a body corporate, composed not of ministers exclusively, but of ministers and elders in equal proportions, and with equal gubernatorial authority, not of a legislative, but only of a ministerial nature, Presbyterianism stands opposed to despotism, whether it be despotism over a diocese, or despotism over a congregation, the despotism of ministers over their people, or of people over their ministers. Men generally may love power and liberty in the things of this present world, but the greater part are heartily content that others both think and act for them in matters relating to religion and the world to come. All such persons will prefer, as circumstances may modify their taste, either Papal, Diocesan, or Congregational, to Presbyterial Episcopacy. Presbyterianism will not permit a minister, how strong soever his desire or great his ability to rule over a congregation, to do so; neither will it allow such of the people as may be disposed, to rule over the minister. It scripturally subordinates the minister to his ministerial brethren, and the people to those who have the rule over them in the Lord; and thus, how much soever it may be adapted to the condition, it certainly is not palatable to the wishes of fallen humanity. Presbyterianism is part and parcel of the Cross, and must, in part, partake of the offence of the Cross."

"The elders," says Dr. Aiton, in his Life of Henderson, "than whom there does not exist a more pious and kind-hearted class of men, have ever strengthened the hand and often encouraged the heart of their minister. As a connecting link between a minister and his people, they soften asperities, correct prejudices, and possess opportunities of explaining and justifying or palliating his conduct in many instances, where the injury could neither have been

otherwise found out or counteracted. In the little priory council-meetings at the manse, their discretion, accompanied with modest sincerity, often corrects a want of knowledge of character on the part of the newly inducted moderator. A minister, therefore, without elders in his session, is as much to be pitied as a man without friends; and he is no more fit for the efficient discharge of his parochial duties, than any artisan deprived of the right arm is for his trade. In the presbytery, elders give unity and vigor to our deliberations, promote impartiality of judgment, deaden jealousy among the members, and, above all, give the church a hold on public opinion. In the General Assembly, now the only remnant of Scottish independence, the introduction of lay elders has been attended with the happiest effects. The finest talents usually exercised in secular concerns, are there every day called into requisition, to advance the well-being of the church."

But we must pass on to notice another danger to which the Christian church is exposed, and that is, the tendency to make religion a ministerial and not a personal concern. This is a deep-seated principle of our depraved nature. In our alienation from God, our enmity to him, and our utter indisposition to spiritual things, we are very willing to resign to others the burden of an active and devoted piety. We are very glad to be religious by proxy, and to gratify our selfish love of ease by shifting away from us the obligations of a holy and heavenly zeal. We are full glad to witness whatever amount of consecrated piety ministers may exhibit, if the people are only left undisturbed in the pursuit of their farms, their wealth, or their merchandise. Now this whole spirit is of the flesh; it is carnal; it is earthly; it is anti-Christian. It is the voice of the old man pleading for his old and inveterate habits. It is that love of our own selves and of the world which are in their habitual indulgence wholly irreconcilable with the love of God, of Christ, and of the gospel. This spirit must be expelled, or the church will be possessed as by legions of evil spirits. It must be utterly exterminated, or the cold stupor of spiritual death will paralyze its energies.

And what, under God, is better adapted to bring home to the conscience of every Christian the imperative necessity of such

Christian activity and devotedness, than the claim which is made by God himself to the services of a Christian eldership, chosen from among themselves, and the example which is thus given to every member of the flock, of the practicability and the duty of serving the Lord while diligent in business; and of giving a punctual and faithful attention to all the demands of earthly and relative obligations, while at the same time they present as a consecrated offering to God the living sacrifice of the body, soul and spirit, to the promotion of His glory in the salvation of men? There is in a holy and devoted eldership a living witness to these just claims of heaven; a visible demonstration of the duty of every Christian; an open exposure of the baseless hypocrisy and groundlessness of those excuses by which too many professors of religion shield themselves from the just demand of charity and piety; and an undeniable proof that it is the "reasonable service" of all who profess to be followers of Christ, while diligent in worldly business, to be at the same time fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; and to live not to themselves, or for any temporal interests, but unto Him who died for them and rose again.

Finally, let us exhibit the value and importance of the eldership, by considering how admirably the church courts, which they unite in forming, meet the wants of active and efficient Boards or Agencies by which the operations of benevolence may be carried on, and the church aided in all her Christian and evangelical efforts.

It is very remarkable that the Independent churches in England, who have thus far been acting altogether upon the principle of voluntary combination in carrying forward their missionary and other labors, are now led to acknowledge the necessity of some such ecclesiastical arrangement as we possess. "We lay it down," says Dr. Campbell, the author of the Prize Essay on Lay Agency, "as a fundamental principle, that all evangelical movements, in order to success and permanence, so far as practicable, ought to be congregational as opposed to general and conventional."[1] "Our object," he says, "is to carry

[1] Eclectic Rev. Dec. 1839, p. 669.

this all important principle of congregational operation into every department of Christian agency, and to show that every congregational church is an organized body, capable of performing and designed to perform all manner of evangelical functions, necessary to the spread of the gospel and the salvation of men." Such a church, therefore, "is a system, a compound society, branching forth in every direction where work is to be performed in behalf of religious benevolence. There is not one of those various objects appertaining to the local diffusion of Christian knowledge for which separate societies have been formed, which might not have been far more easily, cheaply, and effectively accomplished by the churches of Christ acting in their individual, organized capacity. Whether those objects relate to Sabbath School instruction—to the farther cultivation of young people of both sexes—to Bible and tract distribution—to district visitation of the poor, in towns and cities, for Scripture reading and exposition—to cottage lecturing and village preaching—or to any other pursuits of a like nature, they can be effectively prosecuted only upon one principle, the principle of congregational operation."[1]

The same principle is very fully and ably discussed by the Rev. W. H. Stowell, President of Rotherham College, in "The Missionary Church, designed to show that the spread of the Gospel is the proper business of the Church as the Church."[2]

Now this is just the system which is already perfectly arranged in the scheme of Presbyterianism, and which is now in full operation in the conduct of our various benevolent enterprises. Every church is a regularly organized Christian society for the great object of glorifying God in the salvation of men. Of this society the church session is the board of managers, and should take effectual means to carry on within each church all the benevolent operations of the church. Each church again is auxiliary to that Presbytery within whose bounds it lies, and whose duty it is to guide, stimulate, concentrate and govern the separate efforts of each individual church. So again each Presbytery is

[1] See Jethro, or A System of Lay Agency. Lond. 1839, pp. 186, 187.
[2] Lond. 1840. 2d edition.

auxiliary to the Synod, and each Synod to the General Assembly, which gives unity, energy and efficiency to the combined efforts of the whole church.

Now were elders what they might and ought to be, it is at once apparent that every church in our whole denomination would be found in readiness to every good work. No agencies would be needful to advise them of their duty, or rouse the slumbering efforts of churches already acquainted with their duty, and make them forward in the work and labor of love. Certainty, economy, and efficiency would soon characterize all the philanthropic and Christian enterprises of the Presbyterian church; and however others might slacken in their zeal, she would be found going on from strength to strength in all holy devotedness to God.

But we must close. And in doing so we would invite attention to the following eloquent delineation of the value and importance of the eldership to the church of Scotland formerly, and of the power it may still exert for the diffusion of Christian influences throughout any land. It is from the pen of the Rev. Mr. Guthrie.

"In our ancestors," he says, "wisdom was justified of her children: and they considered a charge of a thousand people ample enough for any man to manage. Nor did they leave the minister alone to manage it. No more than the captain of a ship-of-war is the only officer on her deck, was the minister to be the only man in his parish clothed with ecclesiastical authority; he was to be aided, supported, and surrounded by a staff of officers, a band of efficient elders and deacons; and as our ancestors thought that a minister had charge enough who had in his parish a thousand people, they thought an elder had charge enough who had in his district some ten or twenty families. They never dreamt of such a state of things as we have in our days in Scotland now. I can point to districts with the population of a parish, and parishes with the population of a county. Nor in the good and olden time did the elder fill a merely honorary or secular office; he did something else, and something better, than stand by the plate, and vote in Presbytery and General Assembly. He visited the sick, his post was often at the bed of death,

he counselled the erring, he went forth to the wilderness and brought the wanderer back to the fold, and was at once a father and a friend, a counsellor and a comfort to the families of his charge; he was known to all of them, and all of them were known to him; his name was a household word, and he could tell the name of every man, woman, and child, within his bounds; and frequently discharging offices both of temporal and spiritual kindness, he thus acquired, within his small and manageable locality, a moral influence that was omnipotent for good. By the smallness of the district the duties of the office were within the compass of men in active business, and as they could be done, they were done, and they were well done; while, as matters stand at present in many parishes, it is true, in respect both of ministers and elders, that their duties cannot be any thing like well done, and therefore they are in all cases imperfectly done, and in some not done at all. The beast lies down under its burden, and so does the man. I defy any minister holding a city charge in Edinburgh to do one-half, one-third his work, as it should be done; you may as well set a solitary man to reap the broad acres of a whole farm; and in such circumstances, there is felt a strong temptation to yield to despair, and to do little or nothing at all.

"Our present undertaking is intended to remedy these evils. We wish from its ruins to rebuild the ancient economy, and to restore what is not to be found now-a-days in any burgh in all broad Scotland—a manageable parish, split up into districts, each containing ten or twenty families, with the Gospel of its parish church as free as the water of its parish well, with a school where the children of the poorest may receive at least a Bible education, and with its minister, its elders, and its deacons, each in the active discharge of the duties of his own department. Such is the machinery that, before many weeks are gone, we trust to see in beautiful and blessed operation in the parish of St. John's. And what good, it may be asked, do we expect to follow? No good at all, unless God give the blessing. Besides the machinery we must have the moving power; but if He smile upon our labors, we enter the field confident of victory. What this system has done in former days it can do again; and we have no fear, though the eyes of enemies should look on, for we

are trying no novel, never-before-tried experiment. Our fathers tried it, and they triumphed in the trial; and with the same seed, the same sun, and the same soil, should not the same cultivation produce as abundant a harvest? The very fields that are now, alas! run rank with weeds, blossomed, and bore their fruit, like a garden of the Lord. From the cavils of some, and the fears of others, we take our appeal to history; what is chronicled in its pages, of our country, when the parochial economy was in full and blessed operation? Kirkton tells us that you might have travelled many a mile and never heard an oath; that there was hardly a household to be found without its household altar; and that the only party who complained were the taverners, and their complaint was, that their trade was broken—men were turned so sober. The testimony of De Foe is to the same effect, and not less remarkable. He tells us, that a blind beggar on his way to Scotland could know when he crossed the border, by the total absence of oaths and profanity in the language of the people; and down in these lanes, which are now the haunts of misery and crime, there are still vestiges to be found of the prevailing religion of other days; above many of their doorways one can still decipher a text of Scripture; and now, in those houses where it stands carved in stone by the piety of our ancestors, you may ascend, as I have often done, from the cellar to the garret, and, amid all the families that crowd the tenement, you will hardly find one Bible, one communicant, one solitary person that frequents the house of God. When we think of those who once inhabited these dwellings, and how the prayer and the psalm were once heard where debauchery now holds her riot, and where, on the very Sabbath-day, I have been compelled to cease my prayer, because, from a neighboring apartment, the sound of blows, the curses of men, and the screams of women, and the cries of murder have drowned my voice;—when we think of this melancholy contrast, who can help exclaiming, 'How is the gold become dim, the most fine gold, how is it perished!' I know there are men who have said that such cases are hopeless, who would thwart us if they could, and having laughed in ungodly scorn at the idea of building churches for these unhappy victims of their country's neglect, would hand them over to the

tender mercies of the policeman and the jailer. Hopeless! I deny that the case is hopeless, or the disease beyond the remedy. 'Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there?' 'Behold,' says God, in answer to these unbelieving and paralyzing fears, 'behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear.' From what difficulties should they shrink who have such promises as these to fall back and rest on: 'What art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain;' 'Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel, I will help thee, saith the Lord; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the winds shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them! and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, thou shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel?' You may take a man to yon infirmary, and they may send him from their wards as incurable; you may take a man to a lunatic asylum, and they may give him over as a hopeless madman; the disease of the body and the delirium of the head may baffle the skill of man; but that man never walked this world whom God's gospel, with God's blessing, could not cure and convert; and we say, what an open church, and an open school, and a manageable parish, with its minister and multiplied elders, have, with God's blessing, done before, with the same blessing they can do again."

APPENDIX.

ON THE USE OF THE TITLE BISHOP.

The word bishop, we have seen, is employed in the New Testament synonymously with the term presbyter, as the special title or designation of that officer in the church whose duty it is to oversee, superintend, preside, preach, and administer the sacraments and discipline of the church. Other terms are employed for the same purpose, such as pastor, minister, angel, ambassador, and steward, but these two, viz., presbyter and bishop, are more frequently employed, and especially when the qualifications and duties of the office are distinctly pointed out.

When the apostles went about settling and completely organizing the churches, they ordained presbyters in every city. (Acts 14: 23.) When Paul took his final leave of the Ephesian Christians he called together their presbyters, whom he also denominates bishops, and whose office he clearly identifies with that of the preacher. (Acts 20: 17, &c.) When Paul writes to the church at Philippi, A. D. 62 or 63, he addresses himself only to the bishops and deacons. (Phil. 1: 1.) When Peter addresses all the churches in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, he exhorts only the presbyters that are among them. (1 Peter 5: 1, 2.) And in all the passages in which full and explicit delineations are given of the nature and qualifications of the ministry, the word bishop is employed. (See 1 Tim. 3: 1–8, Titus 1: 5–9, & 1 Peter 5: 1–5.) In the second of these passages, (Titus 1: 5–9,) the term presbyter and the term bishop are both employed, and the officer denoted by them is clearly identified as an instructor in the faith.

Both these terms, though very similar in meaning, are used to designate the ministry, because the one—PRESBYTER—was familiar to the Jews, and not known among the other nations, and because the other—BISHOP—was familiar among the other nations, and not common among the Jews. And as most of the first Christian churches were composed of both converted Jews and Gentiles, it was important to use both titles for their teachers.

In the Septuagint or Greek translation of the Old Testament, the term bishop is very frequently employed to designate the office of overseer in a sense analogous to that in which it is employed in the New Testament. (Neh. 2 : 9, 14 : 22; Numb. 4 : 16 ; 2 Kings 34 : 12, 17.) The corresponding term "shepherds" is the common title given in the Old Testament to the doctors of the people and to the prophets. (Zech. 2 : 8, &c.) And it is expressly declared that the officers of the church, in the New Testament church, should be known by this title, (Isa. 60 : 17,) "I will make thy officers (in the Greek episcopi, or bishops) peace." (See also Psalms 69 : 25, compared with Acts 1 : 20.) This very passage Clemens, in his Epistle to the Corinthian church, quotes in confirmation of his view of the officers of the church. We will only add, as has been already fully shown, that in the Jewish synagogue the title of bishop or its cognate terms, chazan, angel, &c., were given *exclusively* to the minister who presided, and who had the charge of preaching also.

And while it is thus manifest that both these titles were adopted by the apostolic churches, it is beyond controversy that they came to be the established names by which ministers were known in the period succeeding the apostolic age. No other words, except when they speak figuratively in order to vary their language, are found in THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS, nor are these titles used by them in any other than their original synonymous application to those who occupied the pastoral office. This I have fully proved elsewhere, and in part also in this volume. Neither can any man tell when, or why, the title of bishop came to be exclusively appropriated to an order of ministers *higher* than presbyters, and having supreme authority over them. That the terms presbyter and bishop are the same, and applied only to

one and the same office in Scripture, all prelatists have been constrained to admit. And that there was a gradual change in the use of these words, until at length the term BISHOP was limited to the order of prelates, they also admit; but *when* or *why* this change was introduced they cannot, *because they will not*, tell. The truth is, as has been seen, that one of the presbyters or bishops being necessarily appointed—as is the case now among all Presbyterians—president or moderator of the body of presbyters, who watched over the interests of a whole neighborhood, and who, from the necessity of the case, then lived together, it became necessary to call him by some distinctive name. The apostles called this officer "the presiding presbyter," (1 Tim. 5: 17,) but as there were two principal titles for the ministry, it came afterwards to be the custom to call this "presiding presbyter," by way of brevity, "THE BISHOP," and the others "THE PRESBYTERS." And as many things then conspired to throw power and influence into the hands of this president, who was chosen for life, the application to him of the term "the bishop," came to be fixed, until at length it was regarded as indicating those prerogatives of authority and power which circumstances had attributed to his office. Thus was the higher order of prelatical bishops gradually introduced, with all the pride, ambition, and growing corruption, both in doctrine and in practice, to which the prelatical system has given birth.

This view of the primitive order of the church, will at once account for all subsequent changes; meet all the difficulties of the case; and resolve all the problems which are proposed. Thus, when prelatists draw out their lists and catalogues of successive bishops, in the several apostolic churches, we find them at once, so far as they are credible, in these presidents, who would naturally constitute the individual representatives of their brethren and contemporaries. In later times, when there were several congregations in the same presbytery, the president was made pastor of the *ecclesia principalis*, the *ανθεντικη καθεδρα*, which was *ιδιος θρονος*, his peculiar throne, and thus would he in every way shine forth among the other stars, as the most eminent and brilliant. But, even then, these presidents were eminent only as the first in rank among their col-

leagues in the same *order and office*, just as were archdeacons among the deacons, archpresbyters among the presbyters, archbishops among the bishops, and patriarchs among the archbishops. Thus, also, among the *archontes* at Athens, while all were equal in power, yet was one called *archon*, by way of eminence. His name alone was inserted in the public records of that year, which was reckoned from him. And so also, was it among the five *ephori* at Sparta, of whom, in like manner, one was chosen as president, and actually denominated προεστως, as Plutarch informs us. So that a succession of single persons named above the rest in the apostolic churches, would never prove that they were any other than what we have described—the προεστωτες or presidents of the churches—especially as this title is given to presbyters as well as bishops, even by Cyprian himself.

Again, when prelatists taunt us with the evident existence of diocesan prelacy at an early period, we find its origin in the corruption and abuse of this apostolic presbyterianism, or parochial episcopacy. "For," says the learned Whitaker, the darling of the Church of England, "as at the first one presbyter was set over the rest of the presbyters and made a bishop; so afterwards one bishop was set over the rest of the bishops. And thus that custom hatched the pope with his monarchy, and by degrees brought him into the church."

Such also is the opinion of Vitringa, who says:[1] "From such acts of communion, there were derived, in course of time, titles and dignities altogether unknown in the early ages of the church—for instance, it was necessary that some bishop should summon the council, that some bishop should preside, and as the presidents of the presbyteries had before this assumed to themselves authority, had taken exclusively the title of bishop, and thus came to be looked on as a distinct order from their presbyteries; just so, the presidents of these councils arrogated much to

[1] De Vet. Synag. Part II. ch. iii. in Bernard's Synagogue, pp. 155, 156. See, also, pp. 178, 179, 214, and 229, where he shows how other similar errors crept in. Dr. Hinds traces these offices to the same origin. Hist. of Rise and Progress of Christianity, vol. i. p. 345.

themselves, assumed a higher rank and office; and hence, the titles of archbishop, metropolitan, primate, patriarch, &c."

Thus it came to pass, that the title of bishop was associated with all the pride, pomp, ambition, tyranny, licentiousness, ungodliness, and infamy of men who never, or very seldom, preached at all, and whose only business it was to LORD it over God's heritage, and to live in pomp and luxury, from the taxes imposed upon the enslaved and superstitious church. The very title of bishop therefore came to be identified with these enormities, and to be a hissing and a by-word in the mouth of all men. And when, therefore, the enormous mass of Romish corruptions was thrown off the almost smothered church, at the reformation, and the reformers endeavored to cleanse the Augean stable and to restore the primitive purity and simplicity of Christ's church, they abstained for a time from the use of this abominated title of bishop, in order to do away the powerful association by which it was connected with all that was hateful and fearful. It is not, however, true, as some imagine, that they *rejected* the term, or were at all blind to its true and Scriptural meaning. On the contrary, they every where bring to light the Scriptural meaning and use of the word in all their standards and confessions; and every where contended for it as the true, proper, and only signification. This fact will not, and cannot be denied, since this demonstration of the original parity of the ministry constituted one of the very first towers of impregnable defence, into which the reformers betook themselves, and from which they could not be, and *were not*, dislodged.

Thus Milton, speaking of the Presbyterian form, says: "It is but episcopacy reduced to what it should be, and were it not that the tyranny of prelates, under the name of bishops, had made our ears tender and startling, we might call every good minister a bishop."[1]

The Helvetic Confession thus speaks: "Therefore the church ministers that now are may be called bishops, elders, (or presbyters,) pastors and doctors."[2]

[1] Prose Works, vol. i. p. 52. See, also, pp. 9, 14. See, also, Lord Brooke on Episcopacy. London, 1642, p. 2.

[2] Harmony of Confessions, pp. 234, 235.

"Whereas," says Calvin, "I have indiscriminately called those who govern the churches, bishops, presbyters, and pastors, I have done so according to the usage of Scripture, for WHOEVER executes the office of minister of the gospel, to them the Scriptures give the title of bishops."[1]

There are four ordinary functions or offices in the Kirk of God," says the Second Book of Discipline of 1578, "the office of the pastor, minister or bishop," &c. (Ch. ii. § 6.) This it repeats in the chapter concerning them, (Ch. iv. § 1,) where it says they "are sometimes called episcopi or bishops, because they watch over the flock." And they add this solemn advice to the several officers: "All these should take those titles and names only (leist they be exalted and puft up in themselves) which the Scripture gives unto them, as these import labor, travell and work." (Ch. iii. § 7.)

"There are," said Adamson, in the General Assembly of 1572, "three sorts of bishops; my Lord bishop; my Lord's bishop; and the Lord's bishop. My Lord bishop was in the papistrie. My Lord's bishop is now when my Lord gets the benefice, and the bishop serves for nothing but to make his title sure; and the Lord's bishop is the true minister of the gospel."[2]

Again, in 1576, the General Assembly decided that "the name of bishop is common to all who are appointed to take charge of a particular flock, in preaching the word, administering the sacraments, and exercising discipline with the consent of the elders." This was in the days of Knox and Melville. And Calderwood says: "The Pastor can see no Lord-bishop in Scripture but the Lord's bishop only,—a name of labor and diligence, and not of honor and ease."[3]

So much for the Church of Scotland; and as it regards the Church of England, a candid Episcopalian writer says: "It was the judgment of her founders, (that is, of the Church of England,) PERHAPS UNANIMOUSLY, but at all events generally, that the bishop of the primitive church was merely a presiding elder; a pres-

[1] Comment. on Titus 1: 5.

[2] See similar views of, in a sermon as quoted by Jameson in Fundamentals of the Hierarchy, p. 55.

[3] The Pastor and Prelate. 1628, pp. 2, 3.

byter ruling over presbyters; identical in order and commission; superior only in degree and authority."[1] But for the full quotations on this point, I refer the reader elsewhere.[2] We will only here say, that in the "Declaration of the Functions of Bishops and Priests, &c.," it is said: "Yet the truth is, that in the New Testament there is no mention made of any degrees or distinctions in orders, but only of deacons or ministers, and of priests (presbyters) OR BISHOPS." And to this opinion these English reformers were more readily led, because it was the unanimous judgment of the Canonists and Schoolmen as well as of many of the most eminent of the Fathers. Thus one of the Decretals collected by Pope Gregory IX. was: "We call the Diaconate and the Episcopate sacred orders, because the primitive church is recorded to have held these alone."[3] And the Council of Trent itself was forced to allow that "the name and title of bishop was common to both" bishops and presbyters.[4]

The Divines of the Westminster Assembly were very full and explicit on this subject. In their debates on 1 Tim. 5 : 17, as referring to ruling elders, Mr. Palmer argued that the passage could not refer to two sorts of officers, otherwise it would imply "two sorts of bishops," which was thought to be a sufficient absurdity at once to overthrow such an interpretation. But had he only enjoyed a little of our "new light," he would at once doubtless have perceived that our ruling elders are and must be bishops, and that *therefore* the passage *must* refer to *them*.[5]

The authors of Smectymnuus, written in A. D. 1641, by five of the most influential members of the Assembly, viz. Messrs. Marshall, Calamy, Young, Newcomen, and Sparstow, prove at length that it is of great importance to resume the familiar use of the term bishop. They say,[6] "Whether it be fit that the name bishop, which in Scripture is common to the presbyters with the bishops, (and not only in Scripture, but also in antiquity for some

[1] Essays on the Church, p. 251.
[2] See Presbytery and Prelacy, p. 429, &c.
[3] Ibid. p. 409, &c.
[4] Reynoldson, in Boyce, Anc't Episcop. p. 17.
[5] Lightfoot's Works, vol. xiii. p. 75; also pp. 43, 46, 51, and 54.
[6] See pp. 91–93.

hundreds of years,) should still be appropriated to Bishops, and ingrossed by them, and not rather to be made common to all Presbyters; and the rather, because, first we finde by wofull experience, that the great Equivocation that lyeth in the name Bishop, HATH BEENE, AND IS AT THIS DAY A GREAT PROP AND PILLAR TO UPHOLD LORDLY PRELACY, FOR THIS IS THE GREAT GOLIAH, THE MASTER-PIECE, AND INDEED THE ONLY ARGUMENT WITH WHICH THEY THINKE TO SILENCE ALL OPPOSERS. To wit, the antiquitie of Episcopacie, that it hath continued in the church of Christ for 1500 yeares, &c., which argument is cited by this Remonstrant *ad nauseum usque et usque.* Now it is evident that this argument is a *Paralogisme*, depending upon the Equivocation of the name Bishop. For Bishops in the apostles' times were the same with Presbyters in name and office, and so for a good while after. And when, afterwards, they came to be distinguished, the Bishops of the Primitive times differed as much from ours now, as Rome ancient from Rome at this day, as hath been sufficiently declared in this Booke. AND THE BEST WAY TO CONFUTE THIS ARGUMENT IS BY BRINGING IN A COMMUNITY OF THE NAME BISHOP TO A PRESBYTER AS WELL AS TO A BISHOP.

"Secondly, because wee finde that the late Innovators which have so much disturbed the peace and purity of our church, did first begin with the alteration of words; and by changing the word Table into the word Altar; and the word Minister into the word Priest; and the word Sacrament into the word Sacrifice, have endeavored to bring in the Popish Masse. And the apostle exhorts us, 2 Tim. 1: 13, *to hold fast the forme of sound words:* and 1 Tim. 6: 20, *to avoid the profane novelties of words.* Upon which text we will only mention what the Rhemists have commented, which we conceive to be worthy consideration, (Nam instruunt nos non solum docentes, sed etiam errantes.) The church of God hath always beene as diligent to resist novelties of words, as her adversaries are busie to invent them, for which cause she will not have us communicate with them, nor follow their fashions and phrase newly invented, though in the nature of the words sometimes there be no harme. LET US KEEPE OUR

FOREFATHERS' WORDS, AND WE SHALL EASILY KEEPE OUR OLD AND TRUE FAITH, THAT WE HAD OF THE FIRST CHRISTIANS!"

The sentiments of these divines may be further learned from a judgment given by the British Parliament in 1645, which we take from a publication entitled "An Ordinance of the Lord's and Commons assembled in Parliament, &c. London, 1645, 4to. "Whereas," they say, "the word PRESBYTER, that is to say, ELDER, and the word BISHOP, do in the Scripture intend and signify one and the same function, although the title of bishop hath been *by corrupt custom* appropriated to one, and that unto him ascribed, and by him assumed, as in other things, so in the matter of ordination, that was not meet: which ordination, notwithstanding, being performed by him, a Presbyter joined with other Presbyters, we hold for substance to be valid, and not to be disclaimed by any that have received it; and that Presbyters so ordained, being lawfully thereunto appointed and authorized, may ordain other Presbyters," &c.

Other testimonies might be adduced, but it is unnecessary. The views of Baxter and Lazarus Seaman have been adduced.[1] Owen is very strong: "For the right and duty of rule is," says he, "inseparable from the office of elders, which ALL BISHOPS OR PASTORS ARE." "Some there are," he adds, "who begin to maintain that there is no need of any more but *one pastor, bishop or elder*, in a particular church, other elders (whom he elsewhere calls assistants) for to rule being unnecessary."[2]

Milton will also represent the opinions of his time. In his Treatise of Christian Doctrine, he says:[3] "The ordinary ministers of a particular church are presbyters and deacons. Presbyters are otherwise called bishops . . . . . bishops and presbyters must therefore have been the same."

Elsewhere he says: "Bishops and presbyters are the same to

[1] See Baxter on Episcop. ch. iii. pp. 11, 12, 156; Pt. ii. p. 5; and Disput. on Ch. Gov. 218.

[2] Works, vol. xx. pp. 478, 480, 481. See, also, Lord Brooke on Episcopacy, p. 2; Professor Jameson's Fundamentals of the Hierarchy, pp. 55 and 213; Dr. Alexander's Hist. of the Westminster Assembly, p. 88; Jameson's History of the Culdees, pp, 330–332.

[3] Vol. ii. pp. 180, 181.

us both in name and thing."[1] "It will not be denied that in the Gospel there be but two ministerial degrees, presbyters and deacons."[2] "Through all which book can be nowhere, either by plain text or solid reasoning, found any difference between a bishop and a presbyter, save that they be two names to signify the same order."[3] "A bishop and presbyter is all one both in name and office."[4]

The conclusion of the whole matter then is, that among all the reformed churches there was at first undivided agreement in the opinion that the title of bishop belonged to presbyters or ministers. They also did in fact so apply it in all their official documents and standards, and in all their arguments with Romanists and prelatists. The term *bishop* therefore is the official title given by the reformers in common with *presbyter*, to the ministers of the gospel. And though, for the reasons we have given, the common use of this term in every day parlance was not thought expedient, yet we have seen that such a use of the word was plainly desired and ultimately expected, and its importance fully appreciated.

And since the obloquy and disgrace then commonly attached to the very term bishop, is no longer associated with it; since on the contrary it is now connected with the highest office for dignity and honor in a large branch of the church; and since the very scripturality of *the name* is made a ground for supporting the scripturality of this *prelatical office;*—it is high time that the public mind should be disabused, and the true nature of the Christian ministry be held up to the public view by appropriating to it the name and title which were given to it by its great founder.

So thought the framers of our standards. I do not recollect, nor can I find, any passage (except that in which all the various names of the ministry are given, with their explanations, Form of Government, chap. iv.) in which ministers are called *presbyters. The word is certainly not used in the whole of our Confes-*

[1] Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing, Prose Works, i. 314.
[2] Likeliest Means to remove Hirelings, &c. iii. 356.
[3] Of Prelatical Episcopacy, i. 60.
[4] Ibid. 75. See, also, page 76.

sion of Faith, but only the term minister. (See chap. xxv. § 3; chap. xxvii. § 5; chap. xxviii. § 2.) Neither is it employed in the Larger Catechism, (see Questions 108, 150, 169,) nor in our other standards, so far as I have remarked.

The term most frequently employed in our standards to characterize the ministry is the word minister. (Conf. of Faith as above; Form of Government, chap. i. § 2; chap. ix. § 4; chap. x. § 7, 8; chap. xv. 2; chap. xxii. 3.)

The word teacher is also once used as a general term for ministers. (Form of Government, Introduction, § 5.)

The term *pastor* is also, in a very few cases, used in reference to the charge of a particular flock. (Form of Government, chap. ix. § 1, and chap. xv. § 1.) But this word "pastor" is not the term, as is supposed, most frequently applied to the settled ministers of particular churches. The term *minister* is much more frequently applied for this purpose. (See Form of Government, chap. x. § 2; chap. xiii. § 4; 16 title, and sections 2, 3; Directory, chap. ii. § 2; chap. iii. § 3; chap. v. § 4; chap. vi. § 1; chap. xii., &c.

And now as to the term *bishop*. In the very first place in which our Book defines particularly and carefully the officers of the church, (Form of Government, chap. iii.,) the teachers or ministers are expressly denominated "bishops" or "pastors," the two words which have the same meaning in their original derivation. The term bishop is here used for ministers universally, whether they are in charge or not, and whether they are evangelists or not, just as it was used by the prophets to signify doctors who had no particular charge. The next chapter is headed "Of Bishops or Pastors," (chap. iv.,) and under this heading the term Presbyter is given, as the *fourth* term applied to the office, while the term "bishop" is also used. It is also found in many other places, and in the same *unlimited* sense. It is not confined to a minister having charge of a fixed congregation. It is applied to the ministers who constitute (with the elders, who are carefully distinguished) a Synod; (Form of Government, chap. xi. § 1;) and that it is here to be taken in its unlimited sense, appears from the fact that in section second it is interchanged with the term "*minister*." So also it is applied to the members of the

General Assembly, (chap. xii. § 2,) who are also called "ministers." (Sections 2, 3 and 7.)

Again in chap. xvi. § 1, which is headed "Of the translation or removing a Minister from one charge to another," it is said, "no bishop shall be translated," &c. In the second and third sections it goes on to speak of these same "bishops" as "ministers."

Again in our Book of Discipline, chap. v., we are instructed as to "Process against a Bishop or Minister."

In a note to chapter iv. of the Form of Government it is expressly thought, that "*as the office and character of the Gospel Minister is particularly and fully described in the Holy Scriptures under the title of Bishop—and as the term is peculiarly expressive of his duty as an Overseer of the flock, it ought not to be rejected.*"

This judgment of our church we believe to be important, and worthy of being carried out into practical application at the present time. Romanism and prelacy are making desperate efforts to sustain the divine right and title of their apostolical succession of "bishops," with all its consequent claim to an exclusive possession of the marks and elements and grace of the true church of Jesus Christ. Now this doctrine we believe to be the mark of the beast, the very evidence and proof of Antichrist, and the blasphemy of the foretold usurper who should sit in the temple of God as God, and arrogate to his unchristian system of formalism and superstition the name, title, and attributes of God's visible church. We are bound therefore to contend earnestly against this radical error, from which so many other errors spring; and by laying our axe to the root of the tree, most certainly destroy its baneful and destructive growth.

Now to our mind it seems clear that this whole pyramid of error took its rise from the early and gradual appropriation of the *scriptural term bishop* to the unscriptural and *man-made prelate.* For by covering himself with the garb and character of God's true ministry, the wolf got undiscovered entrance into the fold, and remained unobserved, until by his gradual efforts he had secured to himself power and might, when he was enabled to throw aside his sheep's clothing and subject the simple-minded and unthinking sheep to his imperial and irresistible sway. And by the

very same process by which the wolf got *into* the fold, is he to *get out*. Full many of the thoughtless sheep are still led only by outside appearances, and are therefore satisfied that prelates are what they pretend to be, because they wear God's own heaven-appointed title, undisputed and uncontradicted. Names are things.[1] They are realities. They speak louder than books or refutations, and are heard by those who cannot and who will not read. And from our own efforts to find out the truth in the case, we are verily of opinion that three-fourths even of the most intelligent prelatists could give no better reason for believing in *their* "Bishop" than the fact that he is *a* bishop, and that the Bible most assuredly speaks of bishops.

We are therefore called upon, not only in our standards, but in our official documents and daily usage, to proclaim abroad and in the ears of all men, that prelatical bishops are deceivers and impostors; that they are wolves in sheep's clothing;—and that they are the thieves of whom our Saviour speaks, who came not in by the door, but climbed up some other way into the fold. They are they who, when the good man of the house was asleep, came in and took possession, and having robbed him of his "good name," turned him out of doors, proclaimed themselves masters of the house, and then proceeded to beat the Lord's servants and unmercifully to abuse and enslave them to their vile ends of corruption and heresy.

Such a common and familiar use of the term bishop, not to the exclusion of any other, but in interchange with them, we are under obligation to adopt.

It is due to God, and is positively required at our hands. It is said indeed, that because the term bishop has been so long appropriated in this way, that its original sense would not be understood without a comment, and that therefore, "to avoid the trouble, let our ministers be called by that name by which they are most generally known."

Now is there not a glaring inconsistency between these premises and this conclusion? By whom is this appropriation made?

[1] On this subject see Coleridge's Aids to Reflection, p. 152, Eng. ed., and Taylor's Ancient Christianity, vol. i. p. 74.

By the reformers?—No, they unanimously rejected it. By the framers of our standards?—No, I have shown that they openly, and loudly and constantly protested against it. By the church of Scotland?—No, I have given proof that she has always demanded and is now reclaiming this too much disused title. By the Congregationalists?—No, they too are now contending for the truth in this matter. By our Baptist friends?—No, they too are restoring the word to its proper and familiar usage. By our own church?—No, in her published records you find her ministers put down as *bishops*—while in many of her synods and presbyteries the same proper custom is adopted. This robbery then is sanctioned only by the depredators—and is this a reason for allowing them a peaceful possession of stolen goods? Surely not.

Have we a *right* to allow prelatists and Romanists this peaceable appropriation? I trow not. This is not a matter of indifference, but of moment. Did not the Holy Ghost himself expressly make and denominate presbyters *bishops*? Is not this solemn truth more than once distinctly affirmed in Scripture? (See Acts 20 : 28, and 1 Peter 5 : 2.) And does not the same divine Spirit every where in the Bible use the term bishop and the term presbyter for one and the same ministry? Have we then any *liberty* to *lay down* or to *disuse* this title? Have we any power to allow corrupters of God's word and ordinances to appropriate this title to diocesan prelates—the fruitful source of all ecclesiastical evils? Can we, as Christians—as Presbyterians—who are set for the defence and maintenance of the truth, give place to such unhallowed perversions of God's Word, and abuse of God's Holy Spirit?

But we may do so, it is said, to avoid the trouble of giving a comment! And is it thus we act in reference to the equally appropriate claim to "catholicity"—to "the one holy and apostolical church"—"the true church"—"penance"—"confession"—"regeneration"—"priest"—altar"—"sacrifice"—and many other similar things? Is it not the glory of OUR CHURCH that she is A PROTESTANT—that is, a protesting—church, continually bearing her testimony for all that is truth, and against all that is error—whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear? Let us then for God's sake—for the truth's sake—for the sake of a

pure Bible, and church, and ministry, and worship—proclaim with all our might that OUR MINISTERS ARE THE TRUE SCRIPTURAL BISHOPS, AND THAT PRELATES ARE USURPERS OF A TITLE TO WHICH THEY HAVE NO ONE SINGLE CLAIM OR QUALIFICATION, ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES.

We are required therefore from duty to God, and to his inspired word, and to our belief in its full and plenary inspiration, and *the designed intention* with which it has ordained *all that pertains* to the church and its ministry, to retain, and use, and glory in the name and title of bishop; and to contend earnestly against those who have audaciously set themselves in opposition to the Lord and his anointed servants. But *consistency* not less than *duty* and a sense of justice, demand the same course. We affirm that the term bishop is synonymous with the term minister. So thought our reformers, and so teach our standards every where. And yet while other claimants daily and constantly deny our teaching, and appropriate this title to an order of ministers whom we regard as introduced by men, and not by God, shall we tamely allow them the undivided use of a title which our divine Master placed as a diadem around our brow; told us to wear as a crown of honor; and which we can never forfeit or lay aside, without disgrace, dishonor, and defeat? Such a use of this title therefore we owe to ourselves, to our Protestant brethren, to God who called us to this liberty; and not less to those who, to their own injury and to the injury of the church of Christ, commit such crying sin against the truth, inspiration and integrity of the Bible, and against the rights of the church universal.

We are called to this duty *in self-defence*. Our standards already proclaim to the world our claim to the title of bishop. Our arguments with prelatists every where assume and urge these claims. And whatever opprobrium, or misconception, or abusive imputation of ambitious or improper motives may be made, *are now and have been* incurred. We are already, and necessarily, implicated in all this evil, if evil it be. And we are so while we reject the common use of this term, without the opportunity of self-defence, and in an attitude of glaring inconsistency and cowardly timidity which bespeaks conscious diffidence in the justice of our claims. But by boldly, openly, and

as men, assuming our divine title, we will then make it necessary for those who know not the truth to find it out, and for those who do not think upon it, to lay it to heart and feel all its impressiveness and force.

It has been urged indeed in opposition to this course, "that the term bishop, ever since the word was adopted from the Saxon, has been given to a superior order of clergy, and that general use has fixed that signification of the term." It is therefore argued, that since the term bishop is exclusively a Saxon word, and has ever designated a superior order of clergy, Presbyterian ministers cannot employ it without absurdity and contradiction.

Now the basis of this argument we reject as contrary to fact. It is not true that the term bishop is exclusively Saxon, or that it has always been allowed to mean a superior order of clergy, such as prelates. This we will prove by the testimony of Richardson and Webster. Such objectors have been misled by the partial exhibition of the true relations of this word as given by Dr. Johnson.

"THIS WORD," (BISHOP,) says Richardson,[1] "UPON THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY FOUND ITS WAY INTO ALL THE EUROPEAN LANGUAGES. A. Saxon, bisceop; Dutch, bischop; German, bischof; Swedish, biskop; French, evesque; Italian, vescovo; Spanish, obispo. A bishop," he adds, "is literally an overlooker, an overseer." This is the only meaning he gives the word.

"This Greek and Latin word," says Webster,[2] giving the Greek and Latin forms of the word Bishop, "ACCOMPANIED THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY into the west and north of Europe, and has been corrupted into the Saxon, biscop; Swedish and Danish, biskop; Dutch, bisschop; German, bischof; Italian, vescovo; French, evesque; Spanish, obispo; Portuguese, bispo; Welsh, esgob; and Irish, easgob; in Arabic and Persic, oskof." And the two first meanings given to the word, are—"1. An overseer or spiritual superintendent, ruler, or director;

[1] Dictionary of the English Language.
[2] Ibid. edition of 1841.

2. In the Primitive Church, a spiritual overseer; an Elder or Presbyter; one who had the pastoral care of the church."

Now, from these facts and statements it is manifest—

1. That the term bishop is a corruption of the Greek word *episcopos*, the first letter being left off, and *p* softened into *b*, thus making *biscop*.

2. That the Greek word *episcopos* used in the New Testament to designate the ministry, was, *from the very introduction of Christianity*, carried with the Gospel and the ministers of the Gospel, into all the languages of the countries into which Christianity was introduced.

3. That the various churches in all parts of the world, in order to designate the ministry of the Gospel, did NOT adopt a term which had been used among them to imply a superior order above some inferior order, but did, *by express design*, adopt, in some modified form of pronunciation, the original term given to the ministry by the Holy Ghost in Scripture.

4. That the term bishop is not Saxon, but the Greek word *episcopos* shortened into *piscopos*, thence into *piscop*, and thence, for the sake of euphony, into biscop and bishop.

5. That in the primitive use of this word, in all parts of the world, and in all languages, it meant, not a superior order of clergy, but just what it means in the word of God, "an elder or presbyter, one who had the pastoral care of the church." And if the reader will look into the author's work on "Presbytery and Prelacy," (see pp. 111–114, &c.,) he will find abundant proof from the fathers to show that the term continued to be regarded in the same light for centuries.

The English term *bishop* is therefore the Greek term *episcopos*, modified so as to suit the idiom of the language. Now what is the meaning of the Greek term *episcopos* throughout the New Testament? Let Bishop Onderdonk answer. "The name bishop," says this prelatic champion, "which now designates the highest grade of the ministry, is not appropriated to that office in Scripture. That name is there given to the middle order of presbyters; and all that we read in the New Testament concerning bishops, (including of course the words overseer and oversight,) is to be regarded as pertaining to that middle grade."

Such is the admission of Bishop Onderdonk, which no man of understanding will now venture to gainsay. And what then is and must be the inference? It is manifestly this, that since the English word *bishop* is the Greek word *episcopos*, only in a modified form, the English term bishop can of right refer only to the order of presbyters, and not to the higher grade of prelates. The term bishop does not, AND CANNOT, by any use of man, be made to mean a superior order of clergy; but is exclusively applicable to the one order of presbyters.

This whole argument is, therefore, a flimsy sophistry, founded on a baseless assumption, which is the very reverse of the truth in the case.

Now, as we regard this question, it is a matter of great and momentous consequence. It involves the whole question of the Divine inspiration and authority of the sacred volume; the supremacy of God's word; and the sovereignty and headship of Christ, as the only lawgiver and legislator of his church. God seems to have thrown around this matter the most solemn and unutterable sanctions, for it is explicitly declared that presbyters are made and denominated *episcopoi*, that is, *bishops*, "by the Holy Ghost." Here the title of bishops is given by the Holy Ghost to presbyters, and not to any superior order of clergy. The word bishop is not then an old Saxon term for a superior order of officers, but is expressly, and by design, the original Greek term modified and altered, so as to become a Saxon and English word.

Is this, or is it not, the case? If it is—and who can deny that it is?—then who is he that will dare to sanction the appropriation of this term to an order of clergy superior to presbyters? What is this but to assume Divine prerogatives; to undo what God has done; to unsay what God has said; to gainsay the Holy Ghost himself; to tread under foot the inspired volume; and by the authority of man to alter and subvert the teachings of heaven? We have no more right to alter the decision and teaching of God respecting the title bishop, than we have respecting the doctrine of justification by faith. The one, as much as the other, is above our reach and beyond our power. We have no liberty in this matter. It is not a question of ex-

pediency at all. It is a matter of revelation, and of plain, positive, and commanded duty.

"But for fifteen centuries," it is said, "the world has attached to the term bishop the idea of a superior order of clergy." And what is that to us? For the same time it has overturned the order of Christ's house and the doctrines of Christ's gospel, and taught for doctrines the commandments of men. Our creed is not found in the faith or practice of the last fifteen centuries, but in "the word of God that liveth and abideth for ever." Here is our faith, and woe is unto us if we do not teach whatsoever is here commanded, even though it be "one of the least commandments."

"But the assumption of the title bishop, will inevitably subject us to popular suspicion and ridicule." Let it do so. Let men laugh at us, and have us in derision. This is not our business or our concern. Duty is ours. God has spoken, and we cannot alter his declarations. We must obey God rather than men. We must do nothing less than God requires, and ALL that he requires. And as he has, by the Holy Ghost, given to presbyters this title of bishop, it is our duty to give it to them also. But all this dread of ridicule is pusillanimous and cowardly. The world cannot meet the question and ridicule us. They will themselves be put to shame. Our use of the term will lead to inquiry, and inquiry to conviction, and conviction to the commendation and imitation of our course. Whether we can alter current views or not, in this case we are bound to try, and, as far as we are concerned, to persist. The world is as much against our doctrines as against our polity. But both are of God, and both must be held forth, whether men will laugh or curse, hear or forbear. Neither will we bear our testimony in vain. Other denominations are joining us, and most assuredly the time is coming, WHEN THE TITLE BISHOP, GIVEN BY THE HOLY GHOST TO PRESBYTERS, WILL BE GIVEN TO NONE BUT PRESBYTERS.

Other objections might be distinctly noticed, and have been replied to elsewhere, but it is unnecessary, as they have been already indirectly adverted to, or altogether removed. We will only notice one or two remaining difficulties. "So plain and so particular are our standards on this subject," it has been said,

"that when a man is ordained a minister, *sine titulo*, he is not called a Bishop at all, but an *Evangelist;* that is, a presbyter, not bound to any particular parish or cure—a presbyter like about one-half of those in our church; for I presume at least that proportion were either ordained evangelists or are acting as such. It is supremely idle to call a man *bishop* whose relation to a cure of souls is not sufficient to warrant our calling him, in any proper sense, even an evangelist."

We are very much amazed at the statements in this objection. The definition here given of an evangelist, so as to serve the purpose of the objector, is not that given by the standards, or the usage of our church. Our standards define this office in chapter xv. and chapter xviii. of "The Form of Government." In chapter xv. § 15, an evangelist is defined to be one ordained "to preach the gospel, administer sealing ordinances, and organize churches *in frontier or destitute settlements.*" And in chapter xviii., he is in like manner spoken of as "a missionary sent to any part to plant churches or to supply vacancies, and ordained without relation to particular churches."

Our Book, therefore, does not plainly and particularly attach the term evangelist to all ministers who may at any time be without charge. Neither would the term be understood, if used in reference to a minister who is at the time not in charge of a congregation, though locally occupied in some other business of the church. And we have already seen that *our church, in her public standards, plainly, and indubitably, and repeatedly, employs the term bishop for ministers universally, whether they are in charge or not.* That our church has done wrong in ordaining men when they were not sent forth as evangelists, nor installed over any particular charge, is unquestionably true. But this evil is not remedied by withdrawing from such persons the name of bishop, but by the church courts taking heed not to lay hands suddenly or unadvisedly on any man.

But we proceed to notice the last objection. "While I am on this topic," says the same eminent objector, "let me suggest a collateral doubt. If it is a bishop that we all must be, then bishop be it. But in this case none but *bona fide* bishops can sit in our church courts."

In this objection, the author assumes the very point in dispute, to wit, that they only are *bona fide* bishops, who are placed over some particular church, whereas the contrary has been made incontrovertibly plain. Our standards do not thus use the term bishop, but use it in a general sense, as applicable to all ministers who have been ordained. So much, therefore, for these objections to the use of the term bishop. Whether they have any manner of weight in them, we leave our readers to judge; certain it is that the use of the term is authorized and required by our own Standards—by the Word of God—and by all the Presbyterian churches throughout the world—and also by expediency, consistency, and a due regard to our own character and standing.

This objector adds: "Let us not go too fast. Our fathers were wise men, and we shall find, if we will carefully examine, that their smallest doings had sense in them, and Scripture for them. Some think we are all very wise too, and perhaps we all are. I only suggest doubts."

Now the sarcasm here is entirely misapplied, and turns only its keen edge against its author. HE IS THE INNOVATOR. HE LIBELS THE WISDOM AND GOOD SENSE OF OUR FATHERS. He it is who would oppose the use of a term for which, *as even he allows*, we have the unquestionable sanction of Scripture. His doubts are therefore baseless. They neither rest on the authority of our standards—of our fathers—or of Scripture. That in Scripture the term bishop is employed as a general title, and applied to all ministers our objector allows, whatever more extended application he may *suppose* it to have. That it is thus used in our own standards, we have abundantly shown. And that it was thus used by our fathers, "whose smallest doings had sense in them, and Scripture for them," we have fully demonstrated. Let the objector then be assured of the perfect truth and applicability of what he says, and which we cordially adopt: "One thing I find, and I find it more and more as I advance in years, and therefore more wary; there is often more in a thing than one sees at first. So I am well satisfied it is here; and for one, I stand by old land-marks."

Let us then, without fear or shame, ridicule, or banter, or

the absurd imputation of vanity or ambition—let us introduce familiarly the use of the title bishop in that sense in which it has been given in Scripture, and ever used by our fathers, and by our present standards.

We will only add, as one additional reason, that to the use of this title of bishop in all our ecclesiastical proceedings and public references and advertisements, we are urged by the wide-spread unanimity with which churches of every name, and in every land, are now reverting to this practice, and openly acting upon it. We had noted down many references to the common and designed use of this word in the works and periodicals of many different denominations, both in this country and in England; but the practice has now become so common, that any specification would be useless. The formal determination has been made by many bodies in this country to introduce this term into their customary proceedings. This has been done by some of the New-England Associations, by the Baptist denomination, by the Lutheran church, and by many Presbyterian bodies. It is now very common in Scotland; is under consideration among the Congregationalists; is, to some extent, supported by the Wesleyan body;[1] and has, as we were informed in Ireland, occupied the attention of the Congregational body in that country, by one of whose ministers we were requested to prepare this summary of our views upon the subject.

The adoption of the term bishop equally concerns all denominations, and if all unite in the practice, or even a considerable number, the term will come sufficiently into use to secure the ends in view. For ourselves, we regard the matter as of great practical moment; and while it can do no harm, it will, we think, accomplish much good. The use of the term we are not at liberty to abolish, if we could; and every reason forbids such a disuse of it, if it were allowable. Not only is it true, as we have said, that to many the common and apparently unquestioned use of the term authenticates the scriptural claims of prelatical bishops, but it is also true, (and to this closing remark we ask special attention,) that from this established use of the word even

[1] See Powel on the Apostolical Succession.

the most learned advocates of prelacy are in the constant habit of inferring the existence of *such prelatical bishops* in the early ages and writers of the Christian church. We have met with no writer on the Episcopal side of the question, not excluding the late, but now degraded Bishop Onderdonk, who does not pursue this most jesuitical and irrational mode of defence. Why they do so is very obvious, since this play upon words is THE ONLY possible pretence by which the earliest writers *can be forced* to speak like Episcopalians, or make out even *three* of *the many* orders which the prelacy has made essential to the church. But *how* they can do so, in common honesty, is another question, which is very far from being open to an easy explanation. When such writers are *compelled* to do so, they will assume great credit for candor by admitting that in Scripture the terms bishop and presbyter are synonymous. But instead of arguing from this established meaning of the word in interpreting the fathers,—until these fathers themselves teach us that a different interpretation had been adopted by them, however wrongly,—they assume, on the contrary, that because at a *late* period in the history of the church the word bishop undoubtedly did mean an order claiming higher powers than presbyters, that *therefore* it must be understood *in this sense* in the very *earliest* of the fathers. But the same reasoning would justify the interpretation of the word bishop in this prelatical sense in the Scriptures, which they admit cannot be the case; and it would also justify all the other heresies and abuses which the Romish church bases upon the *present* conventional use of such words as priest, high-priest, altar, penance, confirmation, confess, &c.

The importance, therefore, of familiarizing the minds of men with the true and only proper meaning of the word bishop—for let it never be forgotten that this is a term which the Holy Ghost has thought fit himself to define and appropriate—must be apparent. With this meaning clearly before them, they will be prepared to read the early fathers, or passages from them, understandingly, and not through the medium of Episcopal bias and unrighteous prejudice; and they will not therefore be so ready, as thousands have been, to fall into the trap laid for them by crafty men, who lie in wait to deceive and ensnare souls into their dan-

gerous and delusive system. And if at any time it is important, and our duty, to preserve men within the limits of that church which we believe to be most accordant to the pattern laid down in the mount; how much more is this the case *now*, when the distinction between low and high church Episcopalians has been openly discarded even by such organs as "The Episcopal Recorder;" when the low church party, represented by the Cecils, the Newtons, the Venns, and the Scotts, no longer exists in any avowed form or to any extent; when the lowest Episcopalians now to be found are "EVANGELICAL HIGH-CHURCHMEN;" (a contradiction, and an absurdity;) and when the only ambition now found among this party is to exalt their denomination, and to reject as slanderous, all allusions to any difference or division or possible separation in the Episcopal church. The truth has now been openly and unquestionably sacrificed in that church to the claims of heretical unity and fictitious peace, and they who should be found coming out from a body now given over to the belief and approval of false and dangerous doctrines, are on the contrary found glorying in their shame.[1]

We rejoice, therefore, that in our place in the General Assembly of our church some years ago, we were permitted to give origin to the present extended movement on this subject, by the introduction and subsequent discussion of the following overture. "Whereas in the New Testament the term bishop is used synonymously with that of presbyter as descriptive of the ministerial office; whereas this term has come, by the ecclesiastical usage of a particular denomination, to be appropriated to an order of ministers claiming to be superior to, and distinct from, presbyters; and whereas from our reluctance—in consequence of its association with intolerance and civil jurisdiction—to employ this term in its original and proper signification, (as used in our standards,) this error has been countenanced and greatly promoted. Therefore resolved, that the General Assembly recommends to all its Synods and Presbyteries to employ the term bishop in their regular minutes, lists, and statistical tables; and

[1] Of course there are noble individual exceptions, but they are very much out of place, and impotent to stem the tide of evil.

to all ministers, elders, and church members, to introduce the use of the term, as the ordinary official title of ministers, on all proper occasions."

In allusion to these efforts, Mr. Lorimer, of Glasgow, in his Manual of Presbyterianism says :[1] "Episcopalians obtain an undue advantage over their brethren in other communions, from the word "bishop" in the English language having come to describe the overseer, not of a congregation, but of the clergy. This is not, however, its original meaning. It simply signifies an "overseer." Presbyterians and Congregationalists are equally entitled to use it as Episcopalians, and to apply it to their ministers as "overseers" of the Christian people. Where met with in Scripture, Christians should always remember that it means nothing but the pastor and overseer of the congregation, and that the same is its meaning in the earliest period of the primitive church.

And in his work on the eldership, Mr. Lorimer adds :[2] "Perhaps it would tend to correct false impressions as to officers in the Presbyterian church, were the Presbyterians of this country to adopt the practice which is followed by their brethren in the United States of America, of using only Scriptural names when speaking of their ecclesiastical officers. Thus, in reporting members to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America, ministers are styled bishops, and elders are denominated ruling elders. This restores the word bishop to its primitive Scripture meaning, and deprives our Episcopalian friends of an undue advantage which they possess, from the popular impression that there can be no bishops but diocesan bishops, such as govern the Church of England, owing to the word in common speech being appropriated to them. In the same way, the term elder would be speedily freed from absurd and unmerited reproach. More error is conveyed and perpetuated by incorrect names than many imagine. They exert an injurious influence even over minds which know better."

[1] Edinb. 1842, p. 29.

[2] Glasgow, 1841, p. 44.

NOTES.

Note A.

The following vindication of the order of the Free Church Assembly, on Elders and Deacons, is taken from The Free Church Magazine for August.

The Assembly's Act on Elders and Deacons.

Two objections may be, perhaps we should say, have been, urged against this Act, and we propose here shortly to consider them. The one is, that too much power is given to the Deacons; and the other that too much power is given to the Elders.

The first objection is that too much power is given to the Deacons. On referring to Scripture, we find that the Deacon's office was established because of complaints that the poor were not sufficiently attended to, and the Deacons were appointed for the distribution of the alms of the church among such of the disciples as had need. "Look ye out among you," said the apostles, "seven men, whom we may appoint over *this* business." It is nowhere *expressly* stated that any portion of the ecclesiastical goods was to be administered by them, except that which was destined for the relief of the poor.—Acts 6: 1–4; 1 Tim. 3: 8–13. Now, the objection is, that the Act of Assembly gives the Deacon a much more extensive charge, and invests him with authority in the disposal of the whole of the church's patrimony,—not only that which consists in alms for the poor, but also that which is designed for the support of the ministry, and for the erection and repair of our places of worship.

It is true that the Act in question does all this, and that in all temporal matters whatever, in the whole secular business of the congregation, it places the Deacon on a perfect equality with the Elder, so far as determining how the ecclesiastical goods are to be administered is concerned, and confers on him, moreover, an executive function, whereby he is to give effect to the resolution which the office-bearers at large have seen fit to adopt.

But we see not in this that there is any unwarrantable stretching of the Deacon's office so as to make it embrace objects and powers inconsistent with, or beyond its scriptural design. For it should be observed, that there were two reasons for the institution of the Deaconship. The one may be said to have been more

peculiarly the people's reason; and the other, that of the apostles. The people's reason was, that the widows might not be neglected in the daily ministration; and the reason stated by the apostles was, that they might be enabled to give themselves more exclusively to their spiritual duties, and not be compelled "to leave the Word of God, and serve tables." From the people's reason we gather, that one part of the secular business of the church was sought to be more effectually provided for by the appointment of Deacons, namely, that part which related to the supply of the wants of the poor; and from the apostles' reason we may conclude that the Deacons were to have to do with the whole matter of the daily ministration, and the service of tables; that is to say, with the management of the church's whole temporal affairs. The daily ministration and the service of tables cannot, we conceive, be viewed as having consisted merely in the relief of the poor, according to the usual acceptation of the word. At the time when the office of Deacon was introduced, the disciples of the Lord had all things common, and "as many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made to *every man* according as he had need." Acts 2: 44–46; 4: 32–37. "Every man" had his portion out of that common fund. The generous donors, who had placed in it the proceeds of the sale of their property, received theirs. The destitute widows had a title to theirs. So also had the apostles themselves. And out of that same fund must all payments have been made which were connected with the dispensation of the ordinances of Christ. It is highly reasonable, therefore, to conclude, that the service of tables and the daily ministration embraced all the ordinary disbursements of the church, and its whole temporal business; and that the appointment of Deacons was resorted to for the purpose of lightening the burden of the apostles, in respect of the entire class of secular duties, that their minds might be left more free and undisturbed for the exercise of prayer, and the ministry of the Word. "Duties of a secular nature," the apostles substantially said, "however important these duties may be, cannot be allowed to interfere with the due exercise of the spiritual functions which we are called to perform; and when the care of the temporal concerns of the church becomes so weighty and engrossing as to be incompatible with the charge of men's souls and the preaching of the gospel, it is essential to have other office-bearers through whom we may obtain the requisite relief, and on whom the main burden of the outward business of the sanctuary may be devolved."

In conformity with this view, and, doubtless, on such grounds as have been stated, the Second Book of Discipline says of the Deacons,—"Their office and power is to receive, and to distribute the haill ecclesiastical goods unto them to whom they are appointed." True, it is immediately added—"This they ought to do according to the judgment and appointment of the Presbyteries or Elderships, *of the which the Deacons are not*," &c.; and this may be reckoned scarcely compatible with the Act of Assembly which gives the Deacon the very same vote and authority in disposing of the congregational funds, as it gives to the Elder or the Minister. We think, however, that the power of reg-

ulation here assigned to the presbyteries of the church, where the Deacons have no seats, may be rather regarded as analogous to the power exercised by the commissioners of Presbyteries in General Assembly convened, when they regulate, either directly, or through their committees, the sustentation of ministers, or when they pass an act, as they did in the present case, specifying the purposes to which the church funds are to be applied, and laying down the rules of secular administration; and, at all events, we are satisfied that a more rigid construction of the Second Book of Discipline would be less in accordance with the lessons which Scripture precedent affords us.

The second objection which is taken against the Assembly's Act is, that too much power is given to the Elders. It may appear a little strange that the same law should be liable to objections which thus conflict with each other. Yet so it is. While, on the one hand, there are, as we have seen, plausible (although not solid) grounds for alleging that it stretches unwarrantably the office of Deacon, and gives power to that office-bearer beyond what the original institution did; on the other hand it can be maintained, and with some show of reason, that the Act errs in that very particular with regard to the office of the Elder, and sends him out of his province to exercise authority in the Deacon's department. Why, it may be asked, should we not now, in this time of reform, confine the Elder entirely to those spiritual duties which are so important, and have been heretofore so much neglected, and leave the business of the Deacon's Court to be performed exclusively by those who have no higher and holier work assigned them? There is a seeming force in the question. It is not unfair to call upon us to vindicate the arrangement which vests the administration of the secular affairs of the church, not in the Deacons alone, but in all the congregational office-bearers together. We are bound, in fact, to show that the Pastors and Elders of the church can *lawfully* be associated with the Deacons, in the charge and allocation of ecclesiastical funds.

Our argument shall be short. Four steps will bring us to the end of it. The *first* step is, that the greater office always includes the less. This is not a principle in the state, but it is a well-known and acknowledged principle in the Christian church. The meaning of it is, that the appropriate functions of the Deacon are competent to the Elder, and those of the Deacon and of the Elder to the Pastor,—in other words, that the Elder, *because* he is an Elder, is also a Deacon; and the Pastor, *because* he is a Pastor, is also an Elder and a Deacon. The superior office-bearer may not always exercise the powers of the inferior one, but he is always capable of doing so, and will exercise them, if need be. Hence, the Pastors of the church are spoken of, not only as teachers, but as rulers of the flock; that is to say, the special function of the Eldership belongs to them. Heb. 13: 7, 17. Hence, also, Peter says, "The Elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an Elder." 1 Pet. 5: 1. And hence, in fine, the apostles of our Lord were Pastors, and Elders, and Deacons, in the church. They were Pastors; for they fed the flock. They were Elders; for they ruled it. And they were Deacons; for the whole secular business of the church was performed by them, until the time of the appointment of the seven.

From all this we may infer, at the very least, that, where there are no Deacons, it is competent and proper for the other office-bearers to take the necessary oversight of the church's temporal affairs.

The *second* step in the argument is, that *after* a separate order of men had been appointed as Deacons, the higher office-bearers continued to take some charge of the secular concerns of the church. When Paul received the right hand of fellowship from the other apostles, and it was settled that he should labor in the Gentile field, we are told that a stipulation was made, to which he most cordially acceded. "Only they would," he says, "that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do." Gal. 2: 10. Thus the care of the poor was devolved upon Paul at the very beginning of his career, and he does not appear to have ever been released from it. Twice we find him to have undertaken a long journey to Jerusalem, expressly as the bearer of the offerings of the brethren, and for the purpose of ministering to the necessities of the saints. We read of the first of these occasions in Acts 11: 29, 30, 12: 25. In conjunction with Barnabas, he had diligently labored in word and doctrine at Antioch, for the space of a whole year. The Lord had vouchsafed large success to his servants. "A great number" had believed; "much people" had been added unto the Lord. The Church of Antioch was in a highly flourishing condition; and no reasonable doubt can be entertained that it had its full equipment of officer-bearers,—not only Pastors, but Elders and Deacons. Yet when "the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea," they "sent it to the Elders, by the hands of Barnabas and Saul." Nor was this done because Barnabas and Saul had other business which required their presence in Jerusalem. It is said, ch. 12: 25, that they "returned (to Antioch) from Jerusalem, *when they had fulfilled their ministry*," that is to say, when they had accomplished the errand on which the disciples of Antioch had sent them. The work of ministering to the saints was what they had to do: they did it and returned. It deserves notice, also, that the Church of Antioch sent their contributions "to *the elders*." They "determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea; which also they did, and *sent it to the elders* by the hands of Barnabas and Saul." We know that Deacons had been appointed at Jerusalem. It is a remarkable circumstance, therefore, and has an important bearing on the point now under discussion, that the Antioch offering was not sent to the Deacons, but to the Elders. Many years after, Paul went to Jerusalem a second time on a similar errand. Standing on his defence before Felix at Cesarea, he said, "After many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings," Acts 24: 17; and he previously declared, when writing to the Romans in the prospect of this visit,—"Now I go unto Jerusalem *to minister unto the saints*. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. When, therefore, I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain." Rom. 15: 25, 26, 28. And how warmly the apostle entered into the business, and what eager charge he took of the col-

lection, may be seen by turning to 1 Cor. 16: 1–4, and the 8th and 9th chapters of 2d Corinthians. We there find him rejoicing to receive the gift, and to take upon him the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. 2 Cor. 8: 4, 19, 20. It appears also that Titus, an evangelist and pastor, was actively employed in the same matter of finance and Christian liberality. 2 Cor. 8: 6, 16–18, 23, 24; 9: 3–5.

Our *third* step in this argument is, that the conclusion which we have thus drawn from Scripture, is corroborated as a sound one by the circumstance of its having been adopted by the Reformers, and by them embodied in the Constitution of the Church of Scotland. Take the following extracts in support of our assertion.

"The office of Deacons is to receive the rents, and gather the alms of the kirk, to keep and distribute the same, *as by the Ministers and Kirk shall be appointed. They may also assist in judgment with the Ministers and Elders,*" &c. *First Book of Discipline*, ch. x. § 11. If it be held that the latter clause refers to the spiritual deliberations of the session, then we say that, *a fortiori*, the Deacons may assist the session in judgment, when the temporal concerns of the church are before them; and, in such a case, have we not just the Deacons' Court, as defined by the Act of last Assembly?

"The office of Deacons is to gather and distribute the alms of the poor, *according to the direction of the session.* The Deacons should assist the assembly (*i. e.* the session) in judgment, and may read publicly if need requires." —*Ane short Somme of the Buik of Discipline.*

"The receivers and collectors of these rents and duties must be Deacons or Treasurers, appointed from year to year in every Kirk;—the Deacons must distribute no part of that which is collected, *but by command of the Ministers and Elders;* and they may command nothing to be delivered, but as the Kirk hath before determined," &c.—*First Book of Discipline*, ch. viii. § 8.

"If any extraordinary sums be to be delivered, *then must the Ministers, Elders and Deacons consult*, whether the deliverance of such sums doth stand with the common utility of the Kirk or not, and if they do universally condescend and agree upon the affirmative or negative, then—they may do as best seems; but if there be any controversy among themselves, the whole Kirk must be made privy; and that the matter be proponed, and the reasons, the judgment of the Kirk, with the Minister's consent, shall prevail."—*First Book of Discipline*, ch. viii. § 9. What have we here but the Deacons' Court again?

"Their office and power is to receive and to distribute the haill ecclesiastical goods, unto them to whom they are appointed. This they ought to do according to the judgment and appointment of the Presbyteries or Elderships," &c.—*Second Book of Discipline*, ch. viii. § 3.

"For officers in a single congregation, there ought to be one at the least, both to labor in the word and doctrine, and to rule" (that is, there must be a Pastor). "It is also requisite that there should be others to join in government" (that is, there must be Elders). "And likewise, it is requisite, that there be others to take special care for the relief of the poor" (that is, there must be Deacons).

"*These officers are to meet together* at convenient and set times, for the well-ordering of the affairs of that congregation, each according to his office" (that is, there must be a Deacons' Court, consisting of Pastor, Elders, and Deacons). "It is most expedient that, *in these meetings*, one whose office is to labor in the word and doctrine do moderate in their proceedings" (that is, the Pastor should preside in the Deacons' Court).—*Form of Presbyterial Church Government, agreed upon at Westminster, and ratified by Act of Assembly*, 1645.

The fourth and final step in the argument is, that as it is now manifestly *competent*, both on scriptural and constitutional grounds, that the superior office-bearers of the church should assist in administering her temporal affairs, so it is expedient and necessary, in present circumstances, that their right and power to act in conjunction with the Deacons should be recognized, and the exercise thereof provided for and regulated by the church. A moment's consideration will show this. Previous to the Disruption, the temporalities of the church were chiefly administered by the civil courts. The whole of her property was in their hands. The amount of stipends was fixed by them. They decided, in the last resort, as to the repair and building of manses, of places of worship, and in every question as to schools. Now, all is changed. All these matters are in the church's hands. And they are matters of great importance, although secular in their nature. The wrong adjustment of them would be hurtful to the highest interests of religion. To arrange and settle them in a proper manner often requires weight of character—always wisdom, experience, and knowledge of men and things. Plainly, then, it would be gross infatuation not to call in the aid of the Elders in regard to them. In many of our country congregations the temporal affairs of the church would go to wreck, if the Minister and Elders were to let them alone: and in all our congregations it would be extremely injudicious not to take the benefit of the services of the Elders, who always comprehend a large proportion of the gravest, the most sagacious, and the most influential of our members. If, indeed, it were unlawful to give the Elders any voice as to secular things, no expediency, however urgent, could warrant the church in doing it. But it is not unlawful. Scripture authorizes it. The constitution requires it. We think the Act of the late Assembly, on this subject, not only suited to the position of the church, but sound in the principle on which it proceeds. It gives the Elder no more power than belongs to him by the Word of God, and our ancient laws. And, if it is fairly and patiently wrought, we anticipate the best results.

Note B.

Proofs that the Laity were in primitive times represented in all the Councils of the Church by delegates of their appointment.

We are happy to present the following elaborate testimony as collated by the Rev. Thomas John Young, of John's Island, South Carolina:

The primitive Councils were composed of the Clergy and Laity. The first Council of which we have any account, was that held for the election of a successor to the traitor Judas. (Acts 1: 15.) It was evidently composed of the Clergy and Laity. "The number of names together were about *an hundred and twenty.*"[1] The next Council, if it may be called a Council, was for the choice of Deacons. (Acts 6: 2, &c.) "The multitude of the Disciples" elected, and the Apostles ordained. The third and last Council mentioned in Scripture, (for I cannot consider the meeting of St. Paul with St. James and the Elders of Jerusalem, related in Acts 21, as a Council of the Church,) is that of which we have an account in Acts 15. Here, too, we find the Clergy and Laity assembled and deciding upon the questions proposed for consideration. For although in the 6th verse, the Apostles and Elders only are mentioned as "coming together," yet what follows, teaches us that the Laity were there also, and consenting to that which was determined upon. In the 12th verse it is said "*all the multitude* kept silence." In the 22d verse, "Then pleased it the Apostles and Elders, *with the whole Church.*" And in the 23d verse, the letters go forth with the superscription, "the *Apostles, and Elders, and Brethren* send greeting." So much for the Councils of which mention is made in the word of God.

In noticing the succeeding Councils, we must distinguish the different kinds which were held; for it is only with *one* of them that we are now concerned. There were General or Œcumenical Councils, Patriarchal or Diocesan, Provincial and Consistorial Synods.

Whether any other than Bishops or their proxies *voted* in the General Councils has not been decided. If we take the Council of Nice, the first General Council, as an example, it is certain, according to Eusebius and Socrates, that Presbyters, Deacons and Laics were present and took part in the discussions.[2] The probability is that they also voted. But granting that they did not; then the Bishops may be considered as representing the Clergy, and the Emperor, without whose decree the acts of General Councils were not binding, as representing the Laity.[3]

1) Supposing that the whole number of the seventy disciples were present, these, with the eleven Apostles, would make but 81 of the 120. There must have been, then, at least 39 of the Laity present.

2) "But in this present quire there was a multitude of Bishops, which exceeded the number of 250. But the number of the *Presbyters and Deacons* who followed them, of the Acoluthi, and of *many other persons*, was not to be comprehended." Eus. Ec. His. lib. iii. c. 8. Eng. Trans.

"There were also present a great many *Laics*, well skilled in logic, ready to assist, each their own party." * * * "Against these [the patrons of Arius's opinions,] Athanasius, who was then but a *Deacon* of the Church of Alexandria, contended vigorously." Socrates Ec. His. lib. i. c. 8. Eng. Trans.

In the General Council of Constantinople three Presbyters subscribe among the Bishops. See Con. Constant. Tom. p. 297. Bingham lib. ii. c. 19, § 13, says that Habertus gives several other instances out of the Council of Chalcedon, 2d of Nice, 8th Council, against Photius and others. See also Jewel's Apology, c. vi. § 12.

3) See Barrow, Pop. Supremacy. Supposition vi. § 3, page 200, edition A. D. 1700.

That others, besides Bishops, sat and voted in Patriarchal and Provincial Synods, (the latter corresponding to our General Convention,) is demonstrable from ancient history and the acts of those Synods.[1] The evidence for which, it

1) "Upon this account [the Novatian schism] a very great Synod was assembled at Rome, consisting of sixty Bishops; but of *Presbyters and Deacons* the number was greater." A. D. 251. Eus. Ec. Hist. lib. vi. c. 43. Eng. Trans.

"These men [referring to some who had been carried away by the Novatian schism, but were now returning to the Church] * * divulged all his subtle devices and villanies * * in the presence both of a sufficient number of Bishops, and also of a great many *Presbyters* and *Laics*." Com. Ep. ad Fab. Eus. Ec. H. lib. vi. c. 43. Eng. Trans.

At the Council of Antioch, held A. D. 269 or 270, Presbyters, Deacons and Laics were present. Eusebius, lib. vii. c. 28, after mentioning the names of several of the Bishops, says, "and a great many more may be reckoned: who together with *Presbyters* and Deacons, were convened in the aforesaid city, &c. &c." The Circular letter of that Council runs in the name of certain Bishops and Presbyters, (whose names are given,) and of "all the rest of the Bishops of the neighboring cities and provinces which are with us, the *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*, and the *Churches of God*." Eus. Ec. His. lib. vii. c. 30.

"We ought to take notice," says Valesius, in a note on the above passage, "of the inscription of this Epistle: For we find here, not the names of Bishops only, but also of *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, and of the *Laity* also. The same we may see in the acts of the *Council of Carthage* [A. D. 256], in which Cyprian was President, and in the *Council of Eliberis*" [A D. 305].

Council of Eliberis, A. D. 305. "Residentibus etiam 36 (al 26) *Presbyteris*, adstantibus *Diaconibus* et *omni plebe*." Con. Elib. Procem.

Council of Arles, A. D. 314. In the Imperial rescript, by which Constantine summoned Chrestus, Bishop of Syracuse, to this Council, we find the following:—

'Ενζεύξας σεαυτῶ καί δύο γέ τινας τῶν ἐκ τοῦ δευτέρου θρόνου" associating with you two of the *second throne* [or order]. Eus. Ec. Hist. lib. x. c. 5.

The names of most of the Bishops who attended the Council of Arles are lost, as well as many of those of the *Presbyters*; "yet the names of 15 *Presbyters* are yet remaining." Bingham lib. ii. c. 19, § 12. Con. Arelat. i. in catalogo eorum consilio interfuerunt.

Council at Rome, under Hilary, A. D. 465. "Residentibus etiam UNIVERSIS *Presbyteris*, adstantibus quoque Diaconis, &c. &c." Con. Rom. ap. Justel. Tom. i. page 250.

Council at Rome, under Felix, A. D. 487. The names of seventy-six *Presbyters* are mentioned that sat together with the Bishops in Council, the *Deacons* standing by them, &c. Con. Rom. ap. Justel. Tom. i., p. 255

Council at Rome, under Symmachus, A. D. 499. Sixty-seven *Presbyters* and six *Deacons* subscribed in the very same form of words as the Bishops did. "Subscripserunt Presbyteri numero 67. Cœlius Laurentius Archipresbyter tituli Praxedis hic subscripsi et concensi Synodalibus constitutis, atque in hac me profiteor manere sententia," &c. Con. Rom. ap. Justel. Tom. I., p. 259.

Council at Rome, under Symmachus, A. D. 502. Thirty-six Presbyters are named. "Residentibus etiam *Presbyteris*, Projectitio, Martino, &c. Adstantibus quoque *Diaconis*, &c. Con. Rom. ap. Just. Tom. i., p. 261.

Council at Bracara, A. D. 563. "Considentibus simul Episcopis, præsentibus quoque *Presbyteris*, adstantibusque *ministris* vel *universo Clero*." Con. Bracar. i.

Council at Toledo, A. D. 589. "Convenientibus Episcopis in Ecclesia; considentibus *Presbyteris*, adstantibus Diaconis," &c. Con. Tolet. i.

In the Appendix to Chidley's edition of Jewel's Apology, I find the "ancient form for holding Church Councils." "It is given by Isidore, and from him by Hardouin." I subjoin an extract from it.

"The order according to which the sacred Synod should be held in the name of God.

"At the first hour of the day, before sunrise, let all be cast out of the church; and the entrance being barred, let all the door-keepers stand at the one door, through which the Pre

is not necessary to cite, as our concern is with a still lower Council, corresponding to our Diocesan Conventions. As, however, our Conventions, whether General or Diocesan, are formed on the model of the Convocation of the Church in England, it will be well, in this stage of our argument, to inquire how that body was constituted.

It was divided into two houses. The upper house, prior to the Reformation, was composed of Bishops, Spiritual Vicars of absent Bishops, Custodes Spirituales of vacant Bishoprics, Abbots and Priors. The lower house, of Deans, Archdeacons, a Proctor for each Chapter, a Proctor for each Convent, and two Proctors for all the Clergy (*totumque Clerum*) in each Diocese.[1] After the Reformation, the upper house was composed of the Bishops; and the lower house of the Deans, Archdeacons, a Proctor for every Chapter, and two Proctors for the Clergy of every Diocese. Here all the Clergy of every grade were represented; and the Laity exercised their suffrage, not in the Convocation, but through the Parliament; for no act of the Convocation was binding on the whole Church, until confirmed by an act of Parliament, or by the King.

We are now prepared to consider the fourth kind of Councils—the Consistorial or Diocesan.

By a Diocesan Council or Convention, I mean that body, to which, with the Bishop, is intrusted the conduct of the principal affairs of a Diocese; and these affairs, I contend, were managed by the Bishop, the whole Clergy, and the Laity. These two last being always distinguished from each other, and acting personally, or by their representatives.

It is a common maxim, drawn from the opinions of the Fathers, that "*quid ad omnes pertinet, omnium consensu fieri debet*"—what concerns all should be done by the consent of all. Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, A. D. 251, in one of

lates are to enter. And let all the Bishops, assembling, go in together and take their seats according to the time of their consecration. When all the Bishops have come in, and taken their places, next let those *Presbyters* be summoned, whose admission the nature of the case in hand seems to warrant; and let no Deacon intrude himself among them. After this may be admitted the more eminent of the *Deacons*, whose presence is required by the regular form of proceedings. And a circle being made of the Bishops' seats, let the Presbyters sit down behind them; those, namely, whom the Metropolitan has selected to be his assessors, such, of course, as may act with him both in judging and pronouncing sentence. Let the Deacons stand in sight of the Bishops; then let the *Laity* also enter, who, by choice of the Council, have obtained the privilege of being there. Moreover, the notaries must also come in, as is directed by the regular forms for reading documents and taking notes. Then the doors being fastened, and the Prelates sitting in long silence, and lifting up their whole heart to the Lord, the Archdeacon shall say—'Pray ye!' and presently, &c. &c."

From the preceding testimony, taken together, it is evident that both the Clergy and Laity had voice in Patriarchal and Provincial Synods. The principle which placed them there will appear in the course of the following remarks. The manner of their election, and the influence which they exercised in these Synods varied with the varying condition of the church, and with the views held at different periods and in different countries of the right of the governed in framing the laws by which they were to be affected.

1) See the King's writ to Archbishop Warham for summoning a Convocation; and the Archbishop's writ to the Bishop of London for the same purpose. Records iii. and iv. Burnet's Hist. Ref. See also Addenda i. same work.

his Epistles to Cyprian, uses an expression very like this: "*Quid circa personam eorum observari deberet, consensu omnium statueretur.*"[1] That which concerns their office should be determined by the consent of all. And by this principle, Cyprian, in his Epistle ad Clerum, declares his determination to abide: "That we might order and correct those things which the *common interest* demands concerning the government of the Church, they having been considered in a Council of very many. * * * * On my first entrance on my Bishopric, I determined to do nothing on my private judgment, *without your advice and the consent of the people.* But when, by the favor of God, I shall have come to you, *we will act together.*"[2] Such was his determination, and such his practice in very many instances.[3] It was the principle which prevailed in primitive times, and which, if now acted upon in this assembly, would gain all, and more than all that is contended for.

That the Church, that is, the Clergy and Laity, gave their suffrage in the choice of these their officers, in the time of the Apostles, is evident from the cases to which reference has already been made—the election of a successor to Judas, and the choice of the seven Deacons;—and none can read the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, without being convinced that the consent of the Church was necessary for the ordination of the Bishops and Deacons, whose qualifications for office are therein recorded. Of the practice of the Church in the ages succeeding the Apostles, we take the testimony of Dr. Wall of the Church in England, whose knowledge of Christian antiquity none can question, and using his language, say, "That the primitive Church in the age next to the Apostles always made use of the suffrage of the people in the choice of their officers; not only of Deacons, but of their Presbyters, and especially of their Bishops. The Bishop of any Diocese appointed or ordained such Presbyters as the *people* by their general suffrage appproved of: and when any Bishop died, the *Clergy of that Diocese with the consent of the people,* chose another, commonly one of their own body; and then some of the neighboring Bishops came, and laying on hands, with public prayer, ordained him. And both these things, the *election of the Clergy and people,* and the ordination of some Bishop or Bishops, were counted essential to the being or right of a Bishop." * * * * * "This," he adds, "was the usage and practice of the whole Greek and Latin Church for a thousand years and more, and that continued constantly without interruption, except two or three encroachments; such as in so long a space

1) Cornelius Ep. 46 (al 49) ad Cyp. p. 92,

2) Cyprian Ep. 6 (al 14) ad Clerum. "Ut ea quæ circa Ecclesiæ gubernaculum utilitas communis exposcit, tractare simul, et plurimorum consilio examinata limare possemus. * * Quando a primordio Episcopatus mei statuerim, nihil *sine consilio vostro* et sine *consensu plebis* mea privata sententia gerere: Sed cum ad vos per Dei gratium venero—in commune tractabimus.

3) See Cyp. Ep. 33 (al 38) ad Clerum. "In ordinationibus Clericis solemus vos ante consulere, et mores ac merita singulorum communi consilio ponderare." See also Ep. 24 (al 29) ad Cler.—also Ep. 34 ad Cler. "He would not," says Bingham, lib. ii. c. 19, § 8, "so much as ordain a sub-deacon, or reader, without their consent." See also Cyprian's Epistles, referred to and quoted by Barrow in his "Treatise on the Pope's Supremacy," Sup. v. § 10, page 159 of the folio Edition, A. D. 1700.

are found in the history of any law, rule or practice whatsoever, whether human or Divine."[1]

The testimony of the Fathers and ancient Councils is conclusive on this point. This testimony is familiar, and I will not occupy time by citing more than two or three witnesses, unless the *fact* be disputed and the evidence called for.[2] Clement, A. D. 65, whose name St. Paul tells us was "written in the Book of Life," who conversed with and was instructed by the Apostles themselves, bears his testimony to the fact that the Clergy were chosen "*with the consent of the whole Church.*"[3] Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, A. D. 250, in his Epistle to Fabius, Bishop of Antioch, incidentally mentions a fact which is perfectly conclusive. Something in the baptism of Novatian had been considered irregular. On this account he was "denied orders," says Cornelius, "by *all the Clergy* and *many of the Laity*," and "the Bishop *entreated* license might be granted him to ordain that one person."[4] We have the testimony, to the same effect, of Origen, A. D. 230,[5] Cyprian, A. D, 250,[6] Gregory Nazianzen, A. D.

1) "Critical Remarks" upon some select passages of Scripture, published in 1730.

Dr. Barrow says, "The general practice was this: The neighbor Bishops (being advertised of a vacancy or want of a Bishop,) did convene at the place; then in the congregation, the *Clergy* of the place did *propound a person*, yielding their attestation to his fitness for the charge; which the *people* hearing, *did give their suffrages*, accepting him, if no weighty cause was objected against him; or refusing him if such cause did appear: Then upon their recommendation and acceptance, the Bishops present did adjoin their approbation and consent; then by their devotions and solemn laying on of their hands, they did ordain or consecrate him to the Function." Pop. Suprem. Sup. vi. § 6, p. 203 fol.

Again, he says, "We may, by the way, observe, that in the first times they [Roman Bishops,] had not so much as an absolute power of *ordaining a Presbyter* in the Church of his own city, *without leave of the Clergy and people.*" Page 208, fol. ed. of 1700.

Bishop Bilson says, "In the Primitive Church the *people* did choose, name, elect and decree, as well as the *Clergy.*" Perpet. Gov. Ch. c. 15.

Dr. Cave says, "At all ordinations, especially of superior officers, the *people* of the place were always present, and ratified the action with their approbation and consent." Prim. Christ. p. 240.

2) *Some* of this evidence, for much of which I am indebted to Barrow, Bingham, Valerius, c. &c., will be found in the succeeding notes.

3) Clem. Rom. Ep. i. ad Cor. § 44, Archbishop Wake's trans.

4) Cor. ad. Fab. Euseb. lib. vi. c. 43. "Ὑπὸ παντὸς τοῦ κλήρου, ἀλλα καὶ λαϊκῶν πολλῶν."

5) Origen in the close of his last book against Celsus, speaking expressly of the constitution of Churches or cities of God, affirms of the rulers of the Church, that they are "ἐκλεγομενοι, *chosen* to their office by the *Churches which they rule.*"

6) Ep. 52 (al 55). "Factus est autem Cornelius Episcopus de Dei et Christi ejus judicio, de *Clericorum* pene omnium testimonio, de *Plebis*, quæ tunc adfuit, suffragio." Cornelius was made bishop by the judgment of God and his Christ, by the testimony of almost all the *Clergy*, by the suffrage of the *people* who were then present.

Ep. 68 (al 67) ad frat. Hispan. "Ordinatio justa et legitima, quæ *omnium* suffragio et judicio fuerit examinata." That ordination is just and lawful which shall have been determined by the *suffrage and sentence of all.*

Ep. 68. A. D. 257, in the name of the African Synod. "Plebs ipsa maxime habent protestatem vel eligendi dignos sacerdotes, vel indignos recusandi." The people have the power either of choosing worthy priests, or of rejecting those who are unworthy.

370,[1] Ambrose, A. D. 374,[2] Jerome, A. D, 378,[3] Siricius, A. D. 385,[4] Theodoret, A. D. 423,[5] Celestin, A. D. 423,[6] Socrates, A. D. 439,[7] Sozomen, A. D. 440,[8] Leo Magnus, A. D. 440.[9] This last, after stating the Church's rule, lays down also the principle on which it was based :—"*Qui præfuturus est omnibus, ab omnibus eligatur.*"—He who is to preside over all, should be chosen by all.

The Councils of Carthage, under Cyprian, A. D. 256,[10] Nice, A. D.

1) Gregory Nazianzen commends the election of Athanasius as being after "the example of the Apostles, because he was chosen *ψήφου τοῦ λαοῦ παντὸς*—*by the suffrage of all the people.* Gr. Naz. Orat. 21.

Speaking, in his life of Gregory Thaumaturgus, of Carbonarius, Bishop of Comana, he says that "although pointed out by special Divine revelation, yet before he was ordained he was unanimously chosen *by the whole Church.*" Tom. 3, p. 502.

2) Ep. 82. "Electio et vocatio quæ fit *a tota Ecclesia* vere et certe est Divina vocatio ad munus Episcopi." The election and calling which is made *by the whole church*, is truly and certainly a Divine call to the office of a Bishop.

Amb. Com. in Luc. lib. viii. c. 17, addressing the people of Milan says—"Vos enim mihi estis Parentes, *qui sacerdotium detulistis :* Vos, inquam, Filii vel Parentes; Filii singuli, universi Parentes." Ye are my Fathers *who chose me to be Bishop :* Ye, I say, are both my children and Fathers ; Children in particular, Fathers all together.

3) In Ezek. lib. x. c. 33. "Speculator Ecclesiæ, vel Episcopus vel Presbyter, qui *a Populo* electus est." The watchman of the Church, either a Bishop or a Presbyter, who was *chosen by the people.*"

4) Ep. i. ad. Himer. Tarracon. c. 10. "Presbyterium vel Episcopatum, si eum *Cleri ac Plebis* evocaverit electio, non immerito societur." If the *election of the Clergy and people* shall have called him to the Presbytership or Episcopate, he is deservedly associated.

5) Lib. i. c. 7. He says of Eustathius, Bishop of Antioch, "*ψήφῳ κοινῇ κατηνάγκασαν ἀρχιερεῖς τε καὶ ἱερεῖς καὶ ἅπας ὁ λεώς.*" Both the Chief Priests [Bishops] and *Priests* and *all the people* compelled him by a *common suffrage.*

6) Ep. 2. c. 5. "Nullus invitis detur Episcopus. *Cleri, plebis, et ordinis consensus* et desiderium requiratur." Let no Bishop be given to the unwilling. The consent and desire of the *Clergy and people* is to be required.

7) Lib. vi. c. 2. He says that Chrysostom was chosen *ψηφίσματι κοινῷ ὁμοῦ πάντων, κλήρου τε καὶ λαοῦ*—by the common vote of all, *both Clergy and Laity.*

8) Sozomen speaking of Chrysostom, says, "The *people and Clergy* having voted it, the Emperor gave his consent."

9) Ep. 84 ad Anast. c. 5. "Cum de summi Sacerdotis electione tractabitur, ille omnibus præponatur, quem *Cleri Plebisque consensus* concorditer postularit ; ita ut si in aliam forte personam partium se vota diviserint, Metropolitani judicio is alteri præferatur qui majoribus et studiis juvatur et meritis," &c. When it is to be determined concerning the election of a Bishop, let him be preferred to all, whom the *joint consent of the Clergy and people* shall have demanded ; but if, by chance, the votes of the parties shall have been divided, he should be preferred, by the decision of the Metropolitan, who is supported by *the greater number of votes* and the higher merits," &c.

Ep. 89 ad Epis. Vien. "Expectarentur certe vota *civium*, testimonia *populorum ;* quæreretur *honoratorum* arbitrium, electio *Clericorum.* Qui præfuturus est omnibus, ab omnibus eligatur." Certainly the votes of the *citizens*, the testimony of the *people* should have been waited for ; the will of the *gentry*, the election of the *Clergy* should have been sought. *He that is to preside over all, should be chosen by all.*

10) Cyprian Ep. 68 (al 67) Synod. Ep. African. Synod. "*Plebs* ipsa maxime habet potestatem vel eligendi dignos Sacerdotes, vel indignos recusandi." The *people* themselves chiefly have the power of choosing worthy Priests, or refusing the unworthy.

325,[1] Antioch, A. D. 341,[2] Alexandria A. D. 361 or 362,[3] 3d of Carthage, A. D. 397,[4] 4th of Carthage, A. D. 399,[5] Chalcedon, A. D. 451,[6] Arles, A. D. 452,[7] Auvergne or Clermont, A. D. 535,[8] 3d of Orleans, A. D. 538,[9] 5th of Orleans,

1) Synod. Ep. Con. Nic. Soc. Ec. His. lib. i. c. 9. Eng. Trans. [Melitian Bishops] "shall have no power to *propose or nominate* whom they please."

"And if it shall happen that some of those who now hold ecclesiastical preferments die, then let those [Melitian Bishops, &c.] **** be preferred to the dignities of the deceased; provided that they shall appear worthy, and that *the people shall freely elect them;* provided also that the Bishop of Alexandria doth, by his suffrage, ratify and confirm [the people's election."]

2) Calv. Instit. lib. iv. c. 4, § 11, says of this Council, "Hoc igitur in Concilio Antiocheno vetitum est, ne quis *invitis* ingeratur." This therefore is forbidden by the Council of Antioch, that any one should be forced upon *those unwilling to receive him.*

3) Bingham, lib. iv. c. 2, § 11. "The Eusebian party made it an objection against him [Athanasius], that he had *not the choice of the people:* but the Bishops of Egypt assembled in Synod, in their Synodical Epistle do with great earnestness maintain the contrary, asserting that the *whole multitude* of the people of the Catholic Church, as if they had been all united in one soul and body, cried out requiring Athanasius to be ordained Bishop." Ep. Synod. Concil. Alex. ap. Athen. apol. 2, t. 2, p. 726. Πᾶς ὁ λαὸς—*ἀνεβόων*, *ἔκραζον*, *αἰτοῦντες Ἀθανάσιον ἐπίσκοπον.*

4) This Council decreed, "That no Clergyman be ordained, who has not been examined by the Bishops, and approved by the *suffrages of the people.*" Curries' Jus. pop. p. 306, 1733.

5) Con. Car. 4, c 1. "*Cum consensu Clericorum et Laicorum* et conventu totius provinciæ Episcoporum, maximeque Metropolitani vel auctoritate vel præsentia ordinetur Episcopus." A Bishop may be consecrated by *the consent of the Clergy and Laity,* and the agreement of the Bishops of the whole Province, and, especially by either the authority or presence of the Metropolitan.

Can. 22. "Ut Episcopus *sine consilio Clericorum suorum* Clericos non ordinet; ita ut civium assensum et conniventiam et testimonium quærat." A Bishop may not ordain Clergymen *without the consent of his Clergy;* and he shall also obtain the *assent, approbation and testimony of the citizens.*

Con. Car. 4, c. 3. "Presbyter cum ordinatur, Episcopo eum benedicente et manum super caput ejus tenente, etiam *omnes Presbyteri,* qui præsentes sunt, manus suas juxta manum Episcopi super caput illius teneant." When a Presbyter is ordained, the Bishop blessing him and holding his hand upon his head, *let all the Presbyters* also, who are present, hold their hands upon his head near the hand of the Bishop.

6) Act. xi. This Council declares for the Ephesians having a Bishop chosen by all the flock whom he was to feed—"*παρα πάντων τῶν μελλοντῶν ποιμανεισθαι ψηφισομενος.*"

Act xii. declares that a Bishop shall be settled by the election of all the flock to be fed—"*ἐξ επίλογης παντῶν τῶν μελλοντῶν ποιμανεισθαι ψηφισομενον.*"

7) Con. Arelat. 2, c. 54. "Placuit in ordinatione Episcopi hunc ordinem custodiri, ut tres ab Episcopis nominentur, de quibus *Clerici vel Cives* erga unum habeant eligendi potestatem." This order must be observed in the ordination of a Bishop. Three shall be nominated by the Bishops; one of whom the *Clergy and citizens shall have the power of choosing.*

8) This Council determined "that a Bishop should be raised *omnium electione* et non paucorum favore—by the election of all, and not by the favor of a few." Cur. Jus. pop. p. 310, 1733.

9) Canon 3d determined "that the Bishops of the Province should be chosen by the *Clergy and People;*" assigning the reason, "Qui præfuturus est omnibus, ab omnibus eligatur." He who is to preside over all, should be chosen by all.

A. D. 549,[1] 3d of Paris, A. D, 559,[2] Barcelona, A. D. 599,[3] 4th of Toledo, A. D. 633,[4] 2d of Cabilone, A. D. 649,[5] 3d Constantinople, A. D. 680,[6] all testify the same ; so that we may fearlessly lay down, as maxims of antiquity, the rules already quoted—"*Quid ad omnes pertinet, omnium consensu fieri debet;*" "*Qui præfuturus est omnibus, ab omnibus eligatur.*" I will not allow myself to suppose, even for a moment, that any here present will reject the sentiment expressed by the "judicious Hooker." "For of this thing," he says, "no man doubteth, namely, that in all Societies, Companies, and Corporations, what severally each shall be bound unto, it must be *with all their assents ratified.* Against all equity it were, that a man should suffer detriment at the hands of men, for not observing that which he never did, either by himself or others, mediately or immediately agree unto. * * * * * In this case therefore especially, that vulgar axiom is of force: '*Quod omnes tangit, ab omnibus tractari et approbari debet.*'"[7] I cannot also but hope that our brethren of the Laity will agree to take the converse of the proposition laid down by Innocent, A. D. 402, quoted by the same Hooker—"*Sicut Laici jurisdictionem Clericorum perturbare, ita Clerici jurisdictionem Laicorum non debent minuere*"—and grant that as the Clergy ought not to abridge the jurisdiction of the Laity, so the Laity ought not to take away the rights of the Clergy.[8]

1) Canon xi. "*Sicut antiqui Canones decreverunt*, nullus invitis Episcopus, sed nec per oppressionem potentium personarum *ad consensum faciendum Cives aut Clerici*, quod dici nefas est, inclinentur." *As the ancient Canons have decreed*, let no Bishop be given to those unwilling to receive him. Neither let the citizens or Clergy be influenced, which it is unlawful to say of any, to give their consent, by the oppression of great men.

2) Con. Par. 3. "Et quia in aliquibus rebus, &c." "Because in some things the *ancient custom* is neglected, and the decrees of the *Canons* violated; it is thought good, according to the ancient custom, that the decrees of the Canons be observed, and that no Bishop be ordained [Civibus invitis] if the citizens be unwilling, nor unless he be heartily invited *by the election of the people and Clergy*, and by the command of the Prince, &c. &c." Cur. Jus. pop. p. 311, 1733.

3) Con. Barcinon. Can. 3. By this Canon it was decreed that the *Clergy and Laity should nominate three*, and that the Metropolitan and Provincial Bishops should cast lots which one of the three was to be ordained. Bingham. lib. iv. c. 2. § 17.

4) This Council decreed "that none should be esteemed a Bishop, but he that *was chosen by the Clergy and people of the city.*" Cur. Jus. pop. p 311, 1733.

5) "Si quis Episcopus de quacunque civitate defunctus, &c." "If a Bishop in any city be removed by death, the election of another shall not be but by the neighboring Bishops, *the Clergy and his own citizens;* if otherwise, let his ordination be esteemed void." Cur. Jus. pop. p. 312.

6) Of this Council, Calvin says, "Adeo autem caverunt sancti Patres, ne ullo pacto imminueretur hæc populi libertas, ut quum Synodus Universalis *Constantinopoli* congregata Nectorium ordinaret, id noluerit *sine totius Cleri et populi approbatione*, ut sua ad Synodum Romanum epistola testatum es." The holy Fathers were so careful that this privilege of the people should in no degree be diminished, that when the universal Council assembled at Constantinople wished to ordain Nectorius, it could not be done *without the consent of all the Clergy and people;* as is testified by their own Epistle to the Roman Synod.

7) Ecc. Pol. lib. viii. p. 447. Dobson's Edit. 1825.

8) It is interesting to trace the gradual decline *of the fear of clerical influence* in this Diocese.

In the Convention of 1804, it was determined that "on the business which should come

Note C.

The tendency of Congregationalism.

Pure Congregationalism we believe to be as impracticable in the church as a pure democracy in the state, and both to be subversive of all government and society, and a return to the condition of nature, or of families, which is the next thing to it. Congregationalism, *as it now exists,* has so far allied itself to the

before them, the Convention should vote by *Parishes;*" (Dalcho, p. 483;) consequently the Clerical vote was merged in the votes of the Laity; and if there were more than one Lay-Delegate from a Parish, the Clerical vote was worth nothing.

In 1806, the "Rules and Regulations, &c." which form the basis of our present Constitution, were adopted. By Rule III. (Dalcho, p. 496,) "The officiating Clergy of the Prot. Ep. Churches of this State shall be deemed, *ex-officio*, members of this Convention."

In 1807, it having been ascertained that under that Rule no Clergyman had a right to *vote* in Convention, (Dalcho, p. 500,) it was amended by adding "with a right to vote with the Lay Delegates, provided that such right shall not appertain to the officiating Clergyman of any particular Church, in cases where Lay-Delegates have not been appointed" Here the Clerical vote was still merged in the Lay-vote; and where no Lay-Delegates were appointed the Clergyman had no vote.

In 1808, (Dalcho, p. 503,) the Vestry of St. Philip's Church addressed a letter to the Convention declaring that they disagreed to the article giving the Clergy a right to vote. They instructed their Delegates to propose an amendment by adding the words "or shall not attend." After considerable debate, the proposed amendment was rejected.

In 1809, (Dalcho, p. 507,) a further amendment was made giving the Clergy a right to vote, no Lay-Delegate attending, upon his producing a certificate from the Vestry of his Church of his being authorized by them to do so.

In 1810, (Dalcho, p. 511,) the motion was renewed to prevent a Clergyman from voting when his Lay-Delegates were not present; and was postponed to the next Convention.

It appears that there was no meeting in 1811; and in 1812, (Dalcho, p. 516,) the motion was taken up, and indefinitely postponed. The article was then amended giving the Clergy "a right to vote on all matters requiring the suffrages" of the Convention.

In 1813, (Dalcho, p. 524,) it was determined that the Bishop should "always be, *ex-officio*, President of the Convention."

In 1814, (Dalcho, pp. 530 and 532,) the third rule was again amended, limiting the suffrage of the Clergy to matters not involving the temporal concerns of the Churches, except authorized to vote on those matters by their Churches.

In 1821, (page 21 of the Journal,) on a revision of the Rules, it was proposed to allow the vote by orders. This was lost, there not being a constitutional majority of two-thirds; 13 churches voting for, and 7 churches against it. In the same year Missionaries were allowed a seat in the house.

In 1824, (Journal, p. 19,) the Constitution was amended so as to *allow the vote by orders.* Thus giving a death-blow to long-existing prejudices and jealousies.

The extent to which this jealousy was formerly carried in this State was to reject altogether the office of Bishop (see the author's work on Presbytery and Prelacy p. 528 and 538) on account of its hierarchical despotism. Now the laity are crushed beneath the idol car of this dominant hierarch, so that even a Rector is forced to express rejoicing in the prostration of the laity and in his own permission to be even one of the "inferior clergy." As it is now it is idle to talk of the rights or power of the laity in the Episcopal church, since in a vote by orders if all the laity are opposed by a majority of the clergy they are overruled, and THE BISHOP can veto both.

principles of Presbyterianism as to adopt practically many of the *essential* features of the system. But *pure* Congregationalism as it formerly existed, and as it now exists in some parts of England, must be either a monarchy or na anarchy. M. Beverly, Esquire, thinks that as found in England it is an ecclesiastical monarchy. "Certainly," he says,[1] "we might on a lower ground embarrass the Congregational dissenters, by requesting them to explain the monarchical form of their ministerial government; for, whatever may be their opinions of the ministerial office, this is certain, that they cannot, and would not, endeavor to defend the monarchy of the ministry, by reference to the Scriptures, or even to the well-known records of the first and second centuries of church history. All the Congregational dissenters have, in practice, rejected the plurality of ministers, and have settled down into the monarchical form of government, without the pretence of an argument in favor of such an arrangement. Hence, they are endeavoring to circulate opinions favorable to a large increase of clerical power; which, if it should be successful, would place them in a higher position with regard to the laity, *than even the Presbyterian clergymen:* for the Presbyterian must submit to the decisions of his clerical brethren in general assembly and to his lay brethren in the session; but in the Congregational system, each church is independent, and therefore the Congregational clergymen would govern, unchecked by an appeal, in the convenient arrangement of an independent monarchy."

Such also is the view taken of the system in England by the Rev. Mr. Cumming of London.[2] "Where the minister," he says, "is popular and able to fill his pews with plenty of seat-holders, he can, as he does generally, play the absolute despot. His deacons are his servants, and his members are his subjects. But where the minister is a man of moderate talents, as most men are, neither attractive nor popular, the case is wholly altered. Mr. Angel James's LORD DEACONS then start into power; church-meetings record their convictions of a "dying interest;" and the poor man is cashiered by the same democracy that called him into prominence. Such a man is not an *independent* minister; he is rather the minister of an *independent* congregation. This system is opposed alike to the word of God, the first principles of all social existence, and the interests of ministers and of people."

On the other hand the Plymouth brethren have set up the government of the brethren to the exclusion of any government by a pastorate or ministry. So that with them the laity are every thing and the ministry nothing.[3] Here we have ecclesiastical anarchy.

In pure Congregationalism, therefore we have unbounded *equality*, but not perfect *freedom*, since there are no intermediate bodies or powers to protect the people from the dominion of the pastor, or of any leader in the congregation; or on the other hand to protect the pastor from the anarchical ebullition

1) Heresy of Human Priesthood, p. ii. and xii.
2) Apology for the Church of Scotland, p. 12.
3) Dr. Vaughan's Congreg. pp. 176, 177.

of popular disaffection. The system of *pure* Congregationalism is therefore wholly unlike our republican or representative system. Whatever analogy may be found to it in any *single* congregation, there can be none discovered *in the system as a whole*. There is in it no principle of union, or confederation, no delegation of powers, no balance of responsibilities, and no mutual recognition of responsibility and co-operation; and AS A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT therefore, Congregationalism can have no resemblance whatever to a confederated government, which out of many bodies constitutes one; nor even to a state government, which implies the union of many townships and districts. It is in short NO SYSTEM of ecclesiastical government at all, but a number of ecclesiastical families living under one civil government, and by it held together, but having no ecclesiastical existence as a body, except so far as it adopts practically the essential principles of a presbyterial or confederated government.

[The following should have been inserted at the bottom of the NOTE on page 10.]

See also the Biblical Repertory for January, 1845, p. 54, etc., where it is fully shown that the grant of the keys by Christ was not to the ministry merely, but to the whole church.

"Our divines," says Mr. George Gillespie in his assertion of the government of the Church of Scotland, Part I. ch. 4, "prove against papists that some of these, whom they call laics, ought to have a place in the assemblies of the church, by this argument among the rest; because otherwise the whole church could not be thereby represented. And it is plain enough, that the church cannot be represented, except the hearers of the word, which are the far greatest part of the church, be represented. By the ministers of the word they cannot be represented more than the burghs can be represented in parliament by the noblemen, or by the commissioners of shires; therefore by some of their own kind must they be represented, that is, by such as are hearers, and not preachers. Now some hearers cannot represent all the rest except they have a calling and commission thereto; and who can these be but ruling elders? And again, when the Council of Trent was first spoken of in the Diet at Wurtemberg, Anno 1522, all the estates of Germany desired of Pope Adrian VI. that admittance might be granted, as well to laymen as to clergymen, and that not only as witnesses and spectators but to be judges there. This they could not obtain, therefore they would not come to the council, and published a book, where they allege this for one cause of their not coming to Trent, because none had voice there but cardinals, bishops, abbots, generals, or superiors of orders, whereas laics also ought to have a decisive voice in councils. If none but the min-

isters of the word should sit and have a voice in a synod, then it could not be a church representative, because the most part of the church (who are the hearers and not the teachers of the word) are not represented in it. A common cause ought to be concluded by common voices. But that which is treated of in councils, is a common cause pertaining to many particular churches. Our divines, when they prove against papists, that the election of ministers, and the excommunication of obstinate sinners, ought to be done by the suffrages of the whole church, make use of this same argument; that which concerneth all, ought to be treated of and judged by all."

So argued one of Scotland's noblest sons, and a representative in the Westminster Assembly of Divines. And such, also, are the general views of the Presbyterian church. (See Jameson's Cyprianus Isotimus, pp. 554–556 and 540–544.

THE

PRELATICAL DOCTRINE

OF

APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION

EXAMINED,

AND THE PROTESTANT MINISTRY DEFENDED AGAINST THE ASSUMPTIONS OF POPERY AND HIGH CHURCHISM,

In a Series of Lectures.

BY THOMAS SMYTH,

Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Charleston, S. C.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

Overture adopted by the Synod of S. Carolina and Geo. at its session in 1841.

That the publication of works intended to advocate the distinctive order and polity of our church should be encouraged, and their circulation among our people rendered as general as possible; and it having come to the knowledge of this Synod, that one of their number, the Rev. Thomas Smyth, of Charleston, has recently given to the Church, among other valuable publications, 'An Ecclesiastical Catechism of the Presbyterian Church, for the use of Families, Bible Classes, and Private Members,'—and a series of lectures on 'The Prelatical Doctrine of Apostolical Succession Examined, and the Protestant Ministry Defended against the Assumptions of Popery and High-Churchism.' Therefore, *Resolved*, That the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia regard with pleasure and approbation these publications, as containing an able defence of the divine authority of the Protestant Ministry, and a full and satisfactory exposition of the order and government of our Church; and as demanded by the present state of the controversy on these subjects. And the Synod does, therefore, cordially recommend the said publications to all our Ministers, Elders, and private members, as works of high value, and calculated to advance the intelligence of our Church, on our distinctive peculiarities and doctrines.

Extract from a review of the work in the Biblical Repertory, for Jan'y, 1841.

'This book does no small credit to the industry and talent of the author. The importance of his subject, the correctness of his views, and the abundance of materials which he seems to have had at his command, entitle his performance to the most respectful notice. The author's mind is not only strong but lively, and his book exhibits traces of both qualities. The natural, (and may we not say,) national, vivacity with which he seizes on his topics and discusses them, enlivens in a very satisfactory degree even those parts of the subject which might otherwise have proved most irksome and fatiguing. In a word, the book, (which by the way is elegantly printed,) may be freely commended to the favorable notice of the public; and we doubt not that wherever it is read it will be useful, in apprising those who read it what the high church doctrine really is, and on what grounds it may be most triumphantly and easily refuted.'

From the Southern Christian Advocate.

'We have the pleasure to announce the probable publication of these Lectures at no distant day. As far as opportunity has allowed it, we have attended Mr. Smyth's course, and been both pleased and edified. Pleased, in witnessing a fine combination of candor, kindness, and strength, in the discussion of difficult and soul-rousing questions. Edified, in listening to a vigorous discussion of important first principles, where the lecturer was master of his thesis, and backed his reasoning by extensive authority of the highest value in this controversy. This volume, in which the Prelatic Doctrine of Apostolical Succession is considered, will be highly valuable to the theological student.'

From the Christian Intelligencer, of the Reformed Dutch Church, N. Y.

'This is an exceedingly neat volume of five hundred and sixty-eight pages, beautiful in its mechanical execution, and upon a subject of grave and exciting importance. The work is seasonable, and from the cursory examination which we have as yet been able to give to it, we believe that it will prove to be exceedingly valuable. The work before us, at the present crisis, is seasonable and necessary. It is more ample in its discussion than any that preceded it. It is the result of much and patient research, and will be found to reflect credit alike upon the talents and learning, and we will add also, the temper of the author. He has rendered the Protestant community a debtor. We desire that the work may have the widest circulation, and receive the careful perusal both of Episcopalians and Christians of every other name.'

From the Christian Advocate and Journal, of the Methodist Church, N. Y.

'This is a large octavo volume. The author makes thorough work of his subject, examining the pretensions of Prelacy with care and candor, and exposing their fallacy with unanswerable force and perspicuity. He gives the claims which are set up by Popery and High-Churchmen in their own language, and refutes them by arguments drawn from reason, church history, and Scripture. The Christian world seems to be waked up anew to the high and exclusive claims of Prelacy by the astounding assumptions of the Oxford divines; and we admit that such a book as that before us seems to be called for by the occasion, and will no doubt be read with great interest.'

From the New York Evangelist.

'A large and elegant octavo volume, on a most important topic. Its object is the examination of the claims of the Popish hierarchy, and of that portion of the clergy and laity of the Episcopal Church which sympathizes with them, to the exclusive right to the functions and privileges of the Christian ministry and Church. These claims, always unscriptural, have of late assumed new arrogance and vigor, by the brief currency of the Oxford publications, and the greatly quickened zeal of the Papacy among us. The time has certainly arrived when their exclusive notions should be subjected to the searching test of reason and scripture. If there are those among us who will vauntingly assume that theirs is the only, the valid ministry, that with them are to be found the only authorized ordinances of salvation, that there is no safety but within the pale of their own denomination; let their pretensions be sifted, and the emptiness of their claims be exposed by the clear light of truth. That such a contest with the principle of Prelacy is yet to be waged, and that it is to be abandoned, there can be no doubt. We hail every effort to throw light upon the subject. Mr. Smyth has entered vigorously upon the field of controversy, and has spared neither pains or strength to do it justice. He has gone over the whole ground in a more extended manner than any writer before him in this country, and in an able manner.'

From The Presbyterian.

'The volume before us contains a very full and minute discussion of the doctrine indicated in its title, and is to be followed by another which will vindicate the claims of Presbyterianism. The necessity of the work arises from the

increasing boldness and arrogance with which the Episcopal Church obtrudes its claims as the only true church, with the only valid ordinances, and the only divinely constituted ministry. As to the manner in which he has accomplished his task, we are disposed to judge very favorably, from the necessarily partial manner in which we have been able to examine his work. He has acquired a clear and distinct view of the question discussed in all its bearings, and to each specific point he has brought a mind stored with the fruits of extensive reading. We have admired the extent of his research, and his diligence in learning all that had been said by preceding writers which could throw light on the discussion; and indeed we have rather regarded him as too redundant in his authorities; a fault, by the way, not often committed in this age of jumping at conclusions. Mr. Smyth states the question of Apostolic succession, so much in the mouth of modern Episcopalians, and he views it in all possible lights, weighs it in just balances, and pronounces it wanting. He not only proves that the assumption is unscriptural and unreasonable, but he traces the boasted succession, and shows its broken links, and finds after all the flourish of trumpets, that prelatists are glorying in a mere shadow. He carries the war, moreover, into the enemy's camp, and he carries off many trophies. Mr. Smyth is undoubtedly an able controversialist, and prelatists will find him well armed at all points, if they are disposed to attack.'

From the Southern Christian Advocate.

'The work before us is, we believe, the first distinct treatise published in this country on the subject of the Apostolical Succession, and in opposition to its arrogant assumptions. A very ably argued and well written work has been recently given to the English public, entitled 'An Essay on Apostolical Succession,' by the Rev. Thomas Powell, a Wesleyan minister, of which Mr. Smyth makes honorable mention. We consider, therefore, the publication of these Lectures as a valuable contribution to the religious literature of the time, demanded withal by the claims of that portion of our common Christianity, which is so unfortunate as to have no participation in the anointing oil of prelatical consecration, and which lies beyond the range of apostolico-succession-covenant blessing. Mr. Smyth has executed his task in a candid, kind, and courteous spirit, while he has subjected the theory of Apostolical Succession to the scrutiny of a thorough, extensive, and fearless examination. Innumerable authorities are cited, and a copious index concludes the volume, which embraces upwards of five hundred and sixty-nine pages, and is gotten up in the finest finish of the typographical art.'

From the Charleston Observer.

'Notice was taken of these Lectures while in course of delivery. They are now published, and with the notes, which contain as much reading as the text, make a large volume of five hundred and sixty-eight pages. The typographical execution is in the best modern style, from the press of Crocker and Brewster Boston. Our design, at present, is simply to apprise our readers that the work is published, intending at our leisure to give it a more formal notice. As the basis of the opinion controverted, rests upon what is familiarly known as the Apostolical Succession, it is here that the author has exhibited his chief strength. And were we to say that he has made good his position, it might be regarded as only a judgment expressed in accordance with previously existing prejudices in its favor. But we hope, on the other hand, that none will undertake to condemn it unread. The advocates of High-Churchism, whether Roman or Anglican, are chiefly concerned in the discussion, and possibly they may find in the work something that will moderate their exclusive zeal, and lead them to the exercise of more charity for the opinions of those from whom they differ.'

From The Presbyterian.

'Mr. Editor:—I ask room in your paper to commend this work to the attention of the ministers and intelligent laymen of our Church. If there be any among them who doubt whether a work of this sort was called for, their doubts will not survive the reading of the first Lecture, entitled 'The Necessity for an Exam-

ination into the Prelatical Doctrine of Apostolical Succession.' The discussion, therefore, in which Mr. Smyth has embarked, was provoked by the growing disposition among High-Church Episcopalians, to unchurch the Presbyterian body, and challenge exclusive salvation to the members of churches under Diocesan Bishops. His work is not an attack, but a defence—a defence conducted with great ability and skill. I venture to commend it to the notice of your readers, because I am satisfied they will be instructed and profited by the perusal of it. The lectures are evidently the result of much study, and very extensive research. No single volume I have seen, contains such a mass of authorities and seasonable testimonies, on the Prelatical controversy as this work. It is equally creditable to the author's talents and industry, that he should have found time to prepare, in the midst of his pastoral duties, an octavo of five hundred and fifty pages, on a subject requiring so much study, and involving an examination of several hundred distinct works on either side of the controversy. Such labors ought not to go unrequited; but his brethren will be rendering themselves and the cause of truth a substantial service, by placing it in their libraries; and it is for this reason that their attention is invited to it by one who has no other concern in it than that which is common to every Presbyterian.'

From the New York Observer.

'A formidable volume this is in appearance, and on this very account will repel many who might otherwise be attracted to examine its pages. In a course of twenty-one lectures the author has, with great industry and research, and no mean ability as a controversialist, examined the question before him, and presented, in the compass of a single book, a mass of testimony that must be of value to those whose time and means will not allow them to pursue the investigation through all the original sources, which Mr Smyth has so perseveringly explored.'

From the Watchman of the South.

'We offer a few general remarks at present, intending at an early day to notice them, or at least that last named, far more fully than we usually do. One thing must strike every one who knows the history of the author of these works We refer to his industry. Without very firm bodily health, and having a very laborious pastoral charge, he still economizes time sufficient to bring out, through the press, from time to time, important contributions to the cause he loves. This is as it should be. Mr. Smyth is, of course, a *growing* minister. His influence and usefulness are constantly extending. It is also obvious to any one who reads Mr. Smyth's works, that he has, or has the use of a very good library, and is a man of no mean learning. His works show the importance of ministers' salaries being such as to enable them to 'give themselves to reading.' But Mr. Smyth is not a mere reader. He arranges and uses what he reads. His character as a writer rises every year. Mr. Smyth is also ardently attached to Presbyterianism. Further remarks may be expected in a week or two.'

From the Charleston Courier.

'We would call the attention of all those who profess any regard for the literary character of our southern community, to a work recently published by our esteemed fellow-townsman, the Rev. Thomas Smyth, entitled 'Lectures on the Apostolical Succession.' Whatever may be the opinion of the intelligent reader on the subjects of which it treats, he will acknowledge it to be a striking example of extensive and profound research, and most diligent investigation The author appears to have enjoyed some remarkable advantages in the prosecution of his inquiries. Possessing, as he does, one of the best private libraries in this country—probably the most complete in the theological department—he has had access to an immense mass of authorities, not usually within the reach of the American scholar, and his abundant and voluminous references make his book an absolute index for the use of future writers. His industry, indeed, has left but scanty gleanings, as it would appear, for any who may desire to follow him in this discussion. His style is easy and animated, and the interest of the reader is kept up, without flagging, through an octavo of nearly six hundred

pages. We hope the success of this highly creditable effort may be such as to induce the learned and reverend author to complete his task, by giving promptly to the public the second volume of his course, promised in his preface.'

From the Christian Observer.

'From a cursory examination of this work, we think it well adapted to accomplish the good purposes for which it is designed It exposes and refutes the extravagant assumptions of High-Churchmen, who claim to be the successors of the apostles in the ministry, exclusive of all those who reject their views of Prelacy. The work is worthy of a more extended notice, which shall be given at an early day.'

From the Christian Watchman. (Boston — a Baptist paper.)

'This volume has lain on our table a considerable time, to enable us to give it such an examination as the subject and the merits of the book demand. The discussion throughout is conducted with candor, impartiality, and kindness; and displays no small share of ability, learning, and diligent research. It is decidedly the most able and thorough vindication of the Presbyterian view of the subject which we have ever seen. The discussion, too, is timely, when Episcopal popery is receiving a new impulse from the Oxford writers, whose sentiments find so much sympathy even in our own land. We commend the book therefore, to the attention of our brethren in the ministry, not as taking in every instance that ground which we, as Baptists and Independents should prefer to see taken, but as an able defence of the truth, and an extensive collection of authorities and facts.'

From the Christian Examiner and General Review, (Boston,) Nov. 1841.

'We by no means intend to intimate that the work is ill-timed or superfluous. Such is not our opinion. We believe it will do good. It will meet the new phase of the controversy, and supply what we have no doubt is, in some parts of our country, a pressing want. Even the greatest absurdities, iterated and reiterated in a tone of unblushing confidence, will gain some adherents. Besides, the old treatises on the subject are in a manner inaccessible to the general reader, and will produce a deeper impression, even if it be not more applicable, which in ordinary cases it will be, to the state of the times. The present volume we regard as not only suited to the times, but in itself a production of no trifling merit. It indicates great industry, and no little research on the part of the writer, and its statements appear, from such an examination as we have been able to give it, entitled to confidence. . . . There is an earnestness, good temper and thoroughness which mark the work, which we like, and we can very cordially commend it to the attention of all who feel an interest in the subject.'

From the Southern Quarterly Review.

'This is one of the ablest works of theological controversy, that has appeared during the present century, and we are happy to be able to add that it is the production of a Charleston clergyman. . . . We say then, in the outset, that the Presbyterian church has, in our opinion, in the author of the work before us, a powerful champion, who wields a polished pen, and one who seems to be eminently fitted, by his learning, his talents, and his industry, to maintain manfully the cause he has espoused. We have read his book with deep interest, and with great respect for his ability, and the general candor and fairness of his arguments.' [April, 1843: pp. 534—537.

From the Magnolia, a Literary Magazine and Monthly Review.

'The Doctrine of Apostolical Succession is here examined in an elaborate course of Lectures, twenty-one in number, by the Rev. Thos. Smyth, Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in Charleston. It is not within our province to examine them. We can say nothing, therefore, of the question which Mr. Smyth discusses. No doubt he discusses it ably. He certainly discusses it ear-

nestly. He is ingenious and forcible, and displays a wonderful deal of industry and research. Here now is an octavo of near six hundred pages, brimful of study, and crowded with authorities. We perceive that Mr. Smyth wins the plaudit 'well done,' from numerous high sources, advocating the same doctrine with himself. They seem to think that his argument has done ample justice to his subject; and we may add, so far as we have been able to examine it, that it has been urged in a candid and Christian temper.'

From ——, Attorney General in the State of ——.

'Your Lectures I read with the highest satisfaction, and take great pleasure in acknowledging the obligations which I think the friends of Christian truth, religious liberty, and I will add, of the pure undefiled gospel, owe to you for them. Your vindication of the Church, by which I mean the humble followers of our Lord, by whatever name called, from the claims of usurped ecclesiastical domination, seems to me to be complete; and whilst you have, in succession, destroyed and dissipated every ground of doubt on the subject, in the minds of the unprejudiced, your extensive and enlightened research and discrimination, have enabled you to furnish an armory, where every one may supply himself with weapons for defence against individual attack. Nor am I less gratified with the candid and charitable tone and temper with which your views are propounded, than with the overwhelming mass of argument and illustration by which they are demonstrated. Your lectures seem to me to have been written in a truly Christian spirit; and if they have been cavilled at on that ground, it can only be because men always feel attacks upon their prejudices to be unkind.'

From the New England Puritan.

'This large octavo, of five hundred and sixty-eight pages, is a highly seasonable offering to the Protestant Churches of our country, and displays an amount of learning, of research, of skill and power in argument, of fertility in illustration, of combined candor and earnestness of spirit, rarely to be met with in any volume either of home or foreign origin. We have not had it in hand long enough to master the whole of its contents — but long enough to be satisfied of its happy adaptation to the sad times on which we have fallen, and of the richness of the treasures it offers to the acceptance of the true friends of Christ. The volume before us, though perfectly calm and candid in its discussions, leaves this matter plain as sunlight. More formidable foes to Christ and his apostles are not to be found amid all the tribes of religious errorists, than those arrayed beneath the banners of Popery and High Churchism. It is to be hoped that our brethren in the ministry will avail themselves of the labors of Mr. Smyth, to become thoroughly acquainted with this imposing form of error, and arm themselves with 'panoply divine' to meet it and confound it, ere it attains the preëminence to which it aspires, and which, unresisted, it will inevitably attain.'

From the Boston Recorder.

'This is truly an elaborate work. Our attention has been but recently called, in a special manner, to its contents, but our highest expectations of the candor and ability of the discussion have been more than satisfied. The object of the author's animadversion is not episcopacy, as such; but the arrogant and exclusive claim of High Churchmen and Romanists to be the *only* true Church of Christ; his *only* real ministers, and the 'only sources of efficacious ordinances and covenanted salvation.' The volume is eminently appropriate to the times, and, if read with a sincere desire for the truth, must, we think, prove an immediate corrective of any tendencies towards the Church of England or of Rome.'

From the Christian World, by the Rev. Mr. Stockton, of the Protestant Methodist Church.

'The Lectures which have led us to these remarks, are a valuable addition to religious literature, and more particularly, the polemical department of it. They number twenty-one, and fill a handsome volume of five hundred and fifty pages. The chief aim of the author has been to test the prelatical doctrine by Scripture,

nistory, and facts — to exhibit its popish, intolerant, unreasonable, and suicidal character, and to show that it has been condemned by the best authorities. The latter part of the work is devoted to a consideration of Schism, and to a discussion of the true doctrine of Apostolical Succession The plan covers the whole subject — the execution is well managed. It is bold, but temperate — fearless, but not reckless — a fine specimen of good tactics in a defensive war. As a text book it is worthy of high commendation, abounding as it does in copious extracts, and presenting the views of all our standard authors. It is a focal point where many rays have been gathered — we had almost said at the risk of good taste — a hive, where many bees had deposited honey. If it be not as eloquent as Mason's Essay on this subject, or as cogent and imaginative as Milton's Trace on it, we have no hesitation in preferring it to either, for compass, variety, a d clear demonstration.'

From the American Biblical Repository.

'This well filled octavo volume has come into our hands. Its leading subjects, as indicated in the title-page, are of sufficient importance to demand a thorough discussion; and we agree with our author in the belief that the time has come when such a discussion is necessary for the proper vindication of the rights and duties of the great body of the Protestant ministry and churches, against the assumptions of a portion of their own number, who take common ground with Romanists in excluding from the pale of communion in the 'holy, catholic, and apostolic church,' all who dissent from their doctrine of 'exclusive apostolic succession.' These assumptions are not only found in many of the old and standard divines of the Church of England, but have been of late zealously put forth in the Oxford 'Tracts for the Times,' have been avowed by English and American bishops, and by a great number of the Episcopal clergy of both countries; and the assurance with which they are urged in many recent publications, calls for a patient and thorough examination of the arguments advanced in their support. Such is the work undertaken by our author. The topics of the twenty-one Lectures comprised in this volume, are as follows, etc. These subjects are discussed with great earnestness and strength; and the ample and numerous authorities by which his statements and reasonings are confirmed, show that the author has spared no labor, and dispensed with no available aid, in his investigations. As far as we have examined them, they appear to us thorough and satisfactory, and we cordially commend the work to the diligent study of our readers.'

From the Rev. Samuel H. Cox, D. D. Extract from a Letter.

'Rev. and Dear Sir: — Though personally unknown to you, yet have I been so pleased with your Lectures on the Apostolical Succession, that I thought it but fair to tell you of it. . . . I believe you are doing a protestant and a christian work; and while I regret some incidental differences of another kind between us, I am happy to assure you of my God-speed, and of my prayers for a blessing on your labors.'

From the Rev. Dr. Lamson.

Dr. Lamson in his Lecture on the Uses of Ecclesiastical History, (Christian Examiner, Sept. 1842, p. 12,) in alluding to the claims of prelacy, and the doctrine of Apostolical Succession, says: 'It has been found necessary to take the field, and already a goodly sized octavo, manifesting no little industry and research, has appeared, printed in this city, though written by a Presbyterian of the South, in refutation of these, as we are accustomed to consider, perfectly absurd and obsolete claims.'

From the Protestant and Herald.

After speaking of the author's Ecclesiastical Catechism, a writer in this paper says: 'He had before prepared us for such a treat, by favoring the *Protestant Church* with a profound, learned, and eloquent argument on 'the Apostolic Succession,' utterly refuting the exclusive and inflated claims of all High Churchmen, or '*china men*,' as they have been appropriately styled in the Biblical Repertory

Of this production of his, I have the means of knowing, that *the venerable champion in the cause*, has privately declared 'that Mr. Smyth has quoted books in the controversy, which he had never had the privilege of seeing, and which were even rare in Europe.''

From the Honorable Mitchell King, of Charleston, S. C.

'Rev. and Dear Sir: — You have done a lasting service to the Presbyterian Church, by the publication of your work on the Prelatical Doctrine of the Apostolical Succession. The question which you there discuss has assumed in our times a renewed importance, from the efforts recently made to claim for particular bodies of Christians an exclusive right to the benefits of that covenant of grace, which Christ came to make with all true believers. This question was, as you and I believe, long ago settled by the thorough investigations and conclusive arguments of men worthy, if mortal men can be worthy, of the great cause in which they were engaged; who were influenced solely by the love of truth, and followed that, wherever it might lead them, without regard to merely human authority; and many of whom sealed their testimony with their blood. These times have passed away. But earnest endeavors have been lately made, to shake the confidence of many Christians in the principles of their fathers, and to overthrow their faith in that Church which we believe to be founded on the words of everlasting life. Your work, therefore, I consider as most seasonable and valuable, as reviving and spreading the knowledge of the fundamental truths on which our Church rests. It contains a fuller review of the reasonings and authorities on this subject, than any other work with which I am acquainted, and will, I am persuaded, henceforth be an armory in which the defenders of Presbyterianism can find weapons of proof ready prepared for them. That you may go forward in the course which you have so honorably begun, and that the Great Head of the Church may follow your labors with his rich blessing, is the earnest prayer of, Rev'd and Dear Sir, yours very truly, M. KING.

From the Rev. John Bachman, D. D., of the German Lutheran Church, Charleston, S. C.

'My Dear Sir: — To my mind your Lectures on the Apostolical Succession covers the whole ground, and is, without exception, the most triumphant vindication of our views on this subject, that I have ever read. I regard the work as the most valuable contribution that has ever been made to the Southern Church.'

The Prelatical Doctrine of the Apostolical Succession Examined, and the Protestant Ministry Defended against the Assumptions of Popery and High Churchism, in a series of Lectures. By Thomas Smyth, Pastor of the 2nd Presbyterian Church, Charleston, &c.

This is not a work to be disposed of in a mere *critical notice*. It deserves, as we propose in our next number to give it, a more ample consideration.

The volume is one of the first fruits of the controversy in America. Mr. Smyth, with whom we became acquainted a few years ago, through the medium of his admirable "Ecclesiastical Catechism of the Presbyterian Church," was roused to study the controversy by the hierarchical assumptions, the arrogant bigotry, the anathematizing intolerance, and the proselyting zeal, universally manifested by his Prelatic countrymen. Unestablished though the Prelatic sect in America be, republican as are all its members in profession, at least, the arrogance, intolerance, and pride, of the Anglican church are there displayed in as hyperbolical and bloated a form as even Laud himself ever put forth. Prelacy, in fact, account for it as you will, has demonstrated in every page of its history, that it is as great an enemy to charity, as destructive of brotherly love and peace, and as inconsistent with liberty of conscience or toleration, as Popery itself. Jealous of the attitude assumed by this sect, and zealous for the faith once delivered to the saints, Mr. Smyth was induced to examine the basis upon which such lofty pretensions are supposed to rest; and the present volume is the first fruits of his labors. The work has been already most favorably received, not only among Presbyterians, but also among all other Protestant denominations in America, and is decidedly the best manual of the Prelatic controversy in its present phasis, we have had an opportunity of consulting.

AN

ECCLESIASTICAL CATECHISM

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

For the use of Bible Classes, Families, and Private Members.

THIRD EDITION, MUCH IMPROVED.

This work has been submitted to the revision of the REV. SAMUEL MILLER, D. D. *and many others, and is now published, as approved by them, and with their emendations.*

CRITICAL NOTICES.

Overture adopted by the Synod of S. Carolina and Geo. at its session in 1841.

That the publication of works intended to advocate the distinctive order and polity of our Church should be encouraged, and their circulation among our people rendered as general as possible; and it having come to the knowledge of this Synod, that one of their number, the Rev. Thomas Smyth, of Charleston, has recently given to the Church, among other valuable publications, 'An Ecclesiastical Catechism of the Presbyterian Church, for the use of Families, Bible Classes, and Private Members,'—and a series of Lectures on 'The Prelatical Doctrine of Apostolical Succession Examined, and the Protestant Ministry Defended against the Asumptions of Popery and High Churchism.' Therefore, *Resolved*, That the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia regard with pleasure and approbation these publications, as containing an able defence of the divine authority of the Protestant Ministry, and a full and satisfactory exposition of the order and government of our Church; and as demanded by the present state of the controversy on these subjects. And the Synod does, therefore, cordially recommend the said publications to all our Ministers, Elders, and private members, as works of high value, and calculated to advance the intelligence of our Church, on our distinctive peculiarities and doctrines.

From the Biblical Repertory, for January, 1841.

'Mr. Smyth must be regarded as among the most efficient and active authors in the Presbyterian Church. His valuable work on the 'Apostolical Succession,' reviewed in a preceding part of this number, is a monument of his reading and industry, which has been extensively acknowledged. The 'Ecclesiastical Catechism' before us, is another present to the Church with which Mr. Smyth is connected, which we think adapted to be universally esteemed, and highly useful. It is, as all such manuals ought to be, brief, comprehensive, simple, adapted to weak capacities, and yet sufficiently instructive to gratify the most intelligent minds. The Scriptural quotations to illustrate and establish the principles he lays down, are perhaps, in some cases, unnecessarily numerous, and in a few instances, of questionable application. But it is on the whole so well executed, and possesses so much solid merit, that we hope it may be extensively circulated and used.'

From the Rev. Geo. Howe, D. D., Professor in the Theological Seminary of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia.

'The design and the execution are excellent. It contains a more complete explanation of the order and government of our Church, than I have ever before seen in so small a compass. I think it admirably adapted to the purposes for which it was designed, and could wish to see it in every Presbyterian family, and studied by all our young people, as an appendix to the doctrinal catechisms.'

From The Presbyterian.

'We have received a neat and well-printed little volume of one hundred and twenty-four pages, entitled 'An Ecclesiastical Catechism of the Presbyterian Church, for the use of Families, Bible Classes, and Private Members:' by Rev. Thomas Smyth, Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Charleston, S. C., into which the author has compressed a large amount of very valuable matter, explanatory and illustrative of Church order, and which we regard as particularly serviceable at the present time, as supplying a desideratum in the education of Presbyterian youth. Although the author modestly remarks, that his Catechism is an *attempt* rather than an actual *accomplishment* of all that he believes to be demanded by the necessities of the Church, yet from the attention we have been able to bestow on it, we should regard the execution of the attempt as highly creditable, and we believe the book to be deserving of an immediate adoption in the instruction of the youth of our Church.'

From the Christian Intelligencer, of the Reformed Dutch Church, N. Y.

'The members of the Presbyterian Church should possess a full and satisfactory acquaintance with the principles of Presbyterian government, polity, and worship. This little volume is exceedingly well adapted to aid in gaining this acquaintance, and is suited for general and popular use. While industrious efforts are employed by other denominations in opposition to these principles, it is highly important and desirable that a popular manual, in elucidation and vindication of their creeds, as is provided in this volume, should be circulated. The following are the subjects of the chapters, each of which contains several sections, or subdivisions:—I. The Church. II. Governments of the Church. III. Officers of the Church. IV. Courts of the Church. V. Power of the Church. VI. Fellowship of the Church. VII. Relation of the Presbyterian Church to other denominations. The catechetical form of the work, and the copious scripture-references and authorities, adapt it to the use of instruction. Such a volume as this was needed; and we feel indebted to Mr. Smyth for the preparation of it, as we deem it, in matter and manner, meeting the desideratum required.'

From the Charleston Observer.

'Of the first edition of this work we spoke in terms of commendation. But this is a very considerable improvement, not only in the style in which it is gotten up—for it is very neatly printed and bound—but in the arrangement and matter. It supplies a place that is needed, and yet it is issued merely as an *attempt* to furnish the Church with a brief compend of her worship and polity. As a denomination, we have been remiss in the duty of letting the principles and polity of our Church be generally known. Many of our own members need information on this subject, that they may be established in the truth and order of the house of God. And information is needed also by others, to correct the erroneous impressions respecting it, which have been designedly or undesignedly made upon their minds. The work deserves general circulation.'

From the New York Observer.

'The preparation of this little work was the result of a suggestion by Rev. Dr. Miller, of Princeton; and in it the author has presented the peculiar features of the form of Government in the Presbyterian Church, in questions and answers, and in simple language, that the sentiments inculcated may be readily learned and remembered by the young.'

From the Protestant and Herald.

'MR. EDITOR:—During the past winter, the Female Bible Class of my pastoral charge, have memorized '*The Ecclesiastical Catechism*,' prepared by the Rev. Thomas Smyth, of Charleston, South Carolina. I make this statement in your columns, in order to excite and secure the attention of your readers to the utility and value of that little volume. The ladies have manifested an unusual degree of delight and enthusiasm in their recitations. The result has been, if I mistake not, 'a full and comprehensive acquaintance with the principles of the worship and polity of our Church.' Such was the hope of its worthy and able author in the preparation of his book. The proof-texts are generally printed at length in the Catechism. Without attempting an analysis of this book, allow me to urge Pastors, and Ruling Elders, and Deacons, and Sunday School Teachers in our Churches, to procure this interesting and attractive and cheap compend of Church order, and indoctrinate their families and pupils into these cherished principles of our denomination. Are we not, as a body of people, quite remiss in this high duty? Let the standard-bearers in our host, bestir themselves as they ought, to circulate this work, as a Presbyterian Sabbath School book, and make it, if you please, what it deserves to be, next to our Larger and Shorter Catechism—*a Presbyterian classic* in all our family instructions.'

From the Magnolia, a Literary Magazine and Monthly Review.

'This little volume was meant for, and is acknowledged to have supplied a want, among the members of the Presbyterian Church. It is a copious compilation, containing a large amount of religious information, and we take for granted, that, among the class of Christians for whose use it was prepared, it is far superior to any thing of the sort which had ever been offered them before. It shows industry, reading, and analysis.'

From the American Biblical Repository.

'This little volume is issued by the same publishers as the preceding work, by the same author. It is a well-digested system of questions and answers on the Church, its government,—its officers,—its courts,—its powers,—its fellowship, and the relation of the Presbyterian Church to other denominations. It is a useful manual for Presbyterians, and may be instructive to others.'

An Ecclesiastical Catechism of the Presbyterian Church, for the use of Families and private members. By THOMAS SMYTH, Pastor of the 2nd Presbyterian Church, Charleston, 1841.

This is one of the fullest ecclesiastical catechisms we have seen, forming a small volume of 124 pages, and traversing the whole subject of which it treats very minutely, yet with conciseness and brevity. These small works are most necessary in the present day: and the augmenting demand for them shows that the mind of the nation is rapidly turning towards the investigation of those points which have been so sadly neglected, and to the neglect of which we must attribute much of the ignorance that has of late years been displayed in matters ecclesiastical, during the mighty controversy which the disruption of last May brought to so magnificent, yet so calamitous a close. This catechism has not, we believe, been republished in this country, but ere long we trust it will come into extensive circulation, both to instruct the faithful adherents of the Free Church of Scotland, and to counteract the Erastian and Prelatic leaven which is working so fatally in many quarters.

ALSO, BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

JUST PUBLISHED,

PRESBYTERY AND NOT PRELACY

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ALSO, THE ANTIQUITY OF PRESBYTERY;

INCLUDING AN ACCOUNT OF THE ANCIENT CULDEES, AND OF ST PATRICK.

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PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION,

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THE PRELATICAL DOCTRINE

OF THE

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PREPARED, AT HIS REQUEST, BY THE

Rev. Joseph Tracy,

AUTHOR OF THE GREAT AWAKENING, HISTORY OF THE A. B. C. FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS, &C.

LATELY PUBLISHED, BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

PRESBYTERY AND NOT PRELACY

THE SCRIPTURAL AND PRIMITIVE POLITY;

PROVED FROM THE

Testimonies of Scripture; the Fathers; the Schoolmen; the Reformers; and the English and Oriental Churches.

ALSO,

THE ANTIQUITY OF PRESBYTERY;

INCLUDING

AN ACCOUNT OF THE ANCIENT CULDEES, AND OF ST. PATRICK.

ALSO

ECCLESIASTICAL REPUBLICANISM;

OR, THE

REPUBLICANISM, LIBERALITY, AND CATHOLICITY

OF

PRESBYTERY,

IN CONTRAST WITH PRELACY AND POPERY.

CRITICAL NOTICES, WHICH HAVE ALREADY APPEARED:

From the Rev. Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor in the Theological Seminary, Princeton.

I HAVE read the volume entitled "Presbytery and not Prelacy the Scriptural and Primitive Polity," &c., with unfeigned and high pleasure; and although not able to acquiesce in every opinion and statement which it contains, yet I consider it, in its great outline, as clear, learned, powerful, and altogether conclusive in the refutation of Prelacy and establishment of Presbyterianism. It takes a more comprehensive and complete view of the whole controversy than is to be found in any other single volume with which I am acquainted, and appears to me to be eminently adapted to be useful, and well worthy of the thanks and patronage of every member of the Presbyterian Church. It is eminently a learned work. The author has not suffered himself to write, as too many of the ignorant and arrogant advocates of the sect which he opposes have done, without an acquaintance with more than his own

side of the question. I doubt whether there is another individual in the United States who has read so extensively on this subject, and especially who has made himself so familiar with the works of the highest and best authorities of the Episcopal denomination. Mr. Smyth is undoubtedly entitled to the character of an able advocate and benefactor of the Presbyterian Church. With regard to every important Episcopal claim, he has not only shown that it has no support whatever in the word of God, but that it has been given up as untenable by the most learned and venerable authorities among Prelatists themselves.

With regard to the second work, of smaller size, by the same author, entitled "Ecclesiastical Republicanism," it merits the same general character with its larger companion. It is learned and ample in its compass, forcible in its reasoning, and perfectly unanswerable in its statements and conclusions.

These works cannot fail of making a deep impression on all minds capable of estimating the weight of either authority or argument. Every Presbyterian in the United States ought to feel himself a debtor to the author.

From the Biblical Repertory.

We have here two new volumes by the indefatigable author of the Lectures on Apostolical Succession. The more elaborate and important of the two is constructed on the same general method with its predecessor, but with the advantage of appearing in a more digested, systematic form. In either case, the circumstance which first strikes the reader is the number and variety of authors quoted. None but a well stocked and selected library could furnish the material of such a volume. It is in this richness of material that the value of the work chiefly consists.

If, in addition to the summary view which we have given of the author's plan, and the more general remarks preceding it, we thought it necessary to characterize this treatise as a whole, we should call attention, in the first place, to the comprehensiveness of its design. We are not aware of any interesting or important question, involved in the controversy, which is left untouched. The extent and variety of the author's reading, upon this and kindred subjects, have made him acquainted with the various aspects under which the whole dispute has been presented, and with the precise points which are now at issue. If he has not always made them as distinctly visible to the reader as they must be to himself, it has arisen from the difficulty, which we have already pointed out, of executing with uniform success a somewhat peculiar and complicated plan. We are free to say, however, that no one can attentively peruse this volume without having fully, and

for the most part clearly, brought before his mind the various theories of church government, and the grounds on which they are supported, often in the very words of their respective advocates. This latter circumstance, while it detracts, as we have seen, from the unity and absolute consistency of the author's own argument, adds much to the historical and literary interest of his performance. Its merit, in this respect, is greater than any but an attentive reader would imagine. We are constantly surprised at the industry with which all accessible authorities have been resorted to, and so cited as to furnish the means of more particular examination on the reader's part. In this the author has done wisely, not so much for mere immediate success as for permanent utility and reputation. This volume, like its predecessor, will be apt to alarm American readers by its bulk and show of erudition Those who have been nourished on the modern diet of newspapers and cheap literature have little taste or stomach for more solid aliment. But even some who are at first repelled by the magnitude and copious contents of the volume, may hereafter resort to it as a guide to the original sources of information, and thus be led to read the whole. In this connexion, we must not omit to mention a valuable catalogue or index of the most important works upon the subject, which the author has prepared, and appended to the volume. Most of these works are in his own possession, and have been employed in the construction of this treatise.

Another creditable feature of the work, considered as an original argument, is its freedom from extremes, and an enlarged view of the subject of church government, which could never have resulted from mere solitary speculation, but which has obviously flowed, in this case, from an extensive comparison of opinions with the grounds on which they rest. By such a process one becomes aware that what might otherwise have appeared to be a happy discovery is nothing more than an exploded error, and that much is to be said, and has been said, in favor of opinions, which dogmatical ignorance would at once set down as obsolete absurdities. We think it the more necessary to make this general commendatory statement, because we differ from the author as to some points, both of his reasoning and interpretation, only one or two of which could be even hinted at on this occasion.

These are particulars in which our native publications are too commonly defective, and which we hope will contribute to the circulation of the one before us, abroad as well as at home. On the whole, we look upon the volume as another pleasing and creditable proof of what may be accomplished by untiring industry, not only in retirement or in academical stations, but amidst the labors of an important pastoral charge. That such a situation is no excuse for idleness, is clear from such examples as those of Mr. Smyth and Mr. Barnes.

From the American Biblical Repository.

Ecclesiastical Republicanism, &c.—Mr. Smyth is already well known and duly appreciated as the author of several volumes on ecclesiastical polity, Apostolical succession, Presbytery and not Prelacy Scriptural, Ecclesiastical Catechism, &c. The present volume is designed to show that Presbytery is preëminently republican, that it is liberal and catholic, and admirably adapted, in its principles, both dogmatical and ecclesiastical, to our system of civil polity.

We have always wondered how those who hold to episcopacy could contend for its republicanism and adaptedness to our system of representative government. It seems to us too manifest to be denied, without a blush, that the principles of presbytery, in its extended sense, are precisely those which lie at the basis of our political structure, that they are essentially liberal and republican, and equalled by no others in their accordance with the free spirit of our popular government.

The author has done his part well, and his work merits the commendation of all non-episcopal, and the attention of all episcopal communions. At the present crisis, it is especially demanded, when so lofty claims are set up by those who deem themselves the only conservators of the rights and privileges of God's house. May the writer be rewarded for his work of faith!

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Presbytery and not Prelacy, &c.—It is not in our power now to devote as much space to a notice of this work as its merits certainly would justify. It is well worthy of an extended review, and we should be pleased to have one offered for our pages, as we fear our own pressing and multiplied engagements will not allow us the time necessary for its preparation.

Mr Smyth has taken hold of a great subject with great zeal, and stands up manfully in defence of non-episcopal polity. The day seems to have come when we must again buckle on the armor for a conflict with the papacy and sub-papacy, or Newmania! We must show the people that we stand on solid ground, when we maintain the parity of the ministry, and undertake to substantiate our claims to as high and holy a succession, and as rightful and regular an administration of the ordinances of Christ's house, as ever belonged to Pope or Prelate.

But to the volume. Mr. Smyth has here furnished an armory, where the presbyter can be readily supplied with a panoply, all-sufficient for his defence against the hottest onsets of his antagonists, and indeed one in which he can go forth with confidence of victory.

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From the Southern Quarterly Review, for October, 1843.

It was with much pleasure that we noticed, the other day, that Princeton College, N. J., had conferred on the learned and pious author of this work, the honorary degree of Doctor in Divinity. No Southern Divine is more worthy of the high distinction, and the Faculty of that time-honored institution have exhibited a proper discrimination, in this instance, which will meet with the approval, not only of the friends of that gentleman, but of the whole body of scholars throughout the South. Dr. Smyth has, after many years of laborious research, at length completed his great work on "Presbytery and Prelacy," which is a monument at once of his learning, his industry, and his impartiality. It is an argument in behalf of Christian liberty, in which he advocates, in a style of great force and elegance, and with profound learning, "principles which are common to Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Reformed Dutch, Lutherans, Baptists, and Methodists."

We have just received these works, and, amidst a multiplicity of engagements, have not yet had time to give them more than a cursory perusal. Our impressions are, upon the whole, most favorable. We intend to place them in the hands of an eminent Presbyterian theologian, for the purpose of review,—a respect which is due to their high literary character.

From the New-York Tribune.

PRESBYTERY AND NOT PRELACY THE SCRIPTURAL AND PRIMITIVE POLITY. By Thomas Smyth. New-York: Leavitt, Trow & Co., 194 Broadway.

This book professedly enters into the controversy between different religious sects; and it is obviously improper for us to express an opinion as to the conclusiveness of the argument which the author has made. But we readily bear full testimony to the learning, the ability, industry, and enthusiasm which the author has brought into the very important discussion with which the book is occupied. He professes to place himself upon ground held in common by all denominations of Christians except Prelatists and Papists, and comes forward as a representative of them all, against Episcopacy in any form. He regards the present day as a most important crisis in this great discussion. The efforts of the Roman and Episcopal Churches to establish their exclusive right to be considered the true and primitive Church, which are perhaps more rigorous and general than they have been heretofore, render necessary, in his opinion, more labored fundamental arguments in defence of non-episcopal tenets. He has accordingly sought to furnish in this work an armory whence proofs and authorities may

be drawn in the controversy. In the first book he aims to show from the Holy Scriptures that Presbytery is the Apostolical order of the Church of Christ; he does this by referring to the condition of the Church at the time of and immediately after the Saviour's ministry, by appealing to the Apostolic age of the Church, and by showing that presbyteries are clothed by Apostolic authority with the functions of the ministry and by divine right with ecclesiastical jurisdiction and the power of ordination. In the second book he attempts to show the same points by an appeal to the Fathers, and the third book treats of the antiquity of Presbytery, with an exhibition of the presbyterianism of the ancient Culdees of Ireland and Scotland, and also of St. Patrick. From this statement the theological reader will readily infer the extent and nature of the argument, which is conducted by the author with signal ability and learning. The work cannot fail to be highly useful, and must be greatly prized by those who feel a decided interest in these discussions. Mr. Smyth is a well-known divine of South Carolina, and is the author of several other religious works of merit and popularity. The present work is published in a very neat form, on clear type, in an octavo volume of nearly 600 pages.

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Ecclesiastical Republicanism. By Thomas Smyth. New-York: Leavitt, Trow & Co., 194 Broadway.

The purpose of this work is to disprove the determined claim, which the Prelatic and Romish Churches are said to prefer, to a greater conformity in spirit and in order to our republican institutions than any other denominations. The author is well known to the religious public as the author of several works upon subjects nearly allied to this; and his present work is the result of certain studies into which he was compelled quite largely to enter in the progress of preparing those already issued. The subject is evidently one of great and growing importance; and those who take an interest in it will find it here discussed with great learning and ability. The argument is condensed, and yet comprehensive; and we commend the work to the attention of those for whom it was specially written.

From the New-York Evangelist.

We expected to find the evidences of learning, research, candor, and signal ability in this volume, and have not been disappointed. The author is a clear and cogent reasoner, an honest lover of the truth, and possesses a kind Christian spirit, and rare qualifications for the work to which he has addressed himself. The claims of Prelacy are examined in all their aspects, and are

frankly met and fairly disposed of. We hardly know how any question, not within the reach of a mathematical demonstration, could be more effectually settled. We cannot coincide with all the views taken, but the main citadel he has so completely carried, that we cannot withhold our voice from the chorus of victory.

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ECCLESIASTICAL REPUBLICANISM; or, the Republicanism, Liberality, and Catholicity of Presbytery, in contrast with Prelacy and Popery. By Rev. Thomas Smyth. 12mo.

The author's design has been to show the despotic tendencies of Popery and Prelacy, by contrasting with them the free, liberal, and catholic influence of non-Episcopal forms of church government. The term "Presbytery" he applies in a generic sense, to all denominations who reject prelatical bishops. He maintains its republican tendency in its ecclesiastical and doctrinal character, and presents an array of facts and arguments which show the danger of the sects he opposes. The work is written in a free and animated style, well adapted for popular effect. It is very timely, and should find many readers.

From the New-York Observer.

ECCLESIASTICAL REPUBLICANISM; or the Republicanism, Liberality, and Catholicity of Presbytery, in contrast with Prelacy and Popery. By Thomas Smyth, Author of Lectures on the Apostolical Succession, &c.

An eloquent and able treatise on a delicate subject, and unless we mistake the temper of the times, the book will attract some attention and provoke discussion. Particularly will it be an offensive doctrine to many that Presbyterianism is more congenial to our free institutions than other forms of church government; but this point our author defends valiantly by history and argument.

Mr. Smyth is one of the most voluminous writers of the day. But his books are not merely *volumes*. They are the result of deep study and minute investigation, and as such are worthy of being read by intelligent men.

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"PRESBYTERY AND NOT PRELACY the Scriptural and Primitive Polity," &c.

The author of this handsome octavo of 550 pages, is Rev. Thomas Smyth, of Charleston, S. C., whose former works have introduced him to the favorable notice of the public as an expert controversialist, a diligent student, and a man of extensive research and considerable vigor of mind. In the book before us he has with labor, which we do not envy him, collected a vast array of

testimony from Scripture, the fathers, the schoolmen, the reformers, and the English and Oriental churches, to show the antiquity of Presbytery, and to establish the fundamental doctrine of his work, that Presbytery is the Apostolic and Scriptural form of church government.

At this time very many clergymen and laymen are turning their attention anew and with zeal to the investigation of this subject; and to all such, whether Episcopalians or Presbyterians, we commend this volume, as a valuable digest of the evidence in favor of the Presbyterial side of the question. Clergymen who are writing on the subject will here find reference to numerous authors, and will be spared the labor of much investigation by consulting Mr. Smyth's armory. It may be found at the principal bookstores in the chief cities of the United States.

From the Christian Observer.

This handsome volume is an octavo in size, containing about 570 pages, printed on fine paper and in excellent style. It is divided into three books, which are also subdivided into chapters.

Such, briefly, is the ground occupied by this volume. We have no personal acquaintance with the writer—but we regard his work as important and valuable, and well adapted to promote the interests of truth. The great subject, which he has ably discussed, is assuming new importance in the estimation of the public. The claims of Prelacy, and the ominous movements in the Episcopal Church, are calling attention to it. Many minds are awake to the tendencies of Prelacy, watching its developments as affecting the purity of Christian doctrine, the spirituality of the Church, and the rights of Christian men. Many are seeking information and truth on this subject. To such, this work will be truly acceptable. Its numerous extracts from the works of distinguished writers of every period in the history of the Church, will render it highly valuable to ministers, to students, and to the class of general readers to which we have just referred.

Of the work on Ecclesiastical Republicanism, this paper says:—

The character of this work is indicated by its title. The subjects ably discussed in it are important and worthy of the attention of American citizens, &c.

From the New England Puritan.

We have read this book with much satisfaction. It is the fruit of extensive research. The author has had access to abundant

materials, and has well improved his advantage. He is a sanguine ex animo and jure divino Presbyterian; and his predilections have led him into some errors. He finds Presbyterianism where we find Congregationalism. Indeed, we can hardly quarrel with him for this; since his definition of Presbyterianism is so broad, as to embrace such men as Dr. Owen. Let us have Presbyterianism after Dr. Owen's stamp, and we concede that the Scriptures and the Primitive Church favor it.

With the exception above named, the argument of the book is powerful and conclusive. It is not only a valuable offering to the Presbyterian Church, but it will be read with profit by all denominations; and we hope it will have an extensive circulation.

From the Christian Watchman.

The plan and design of the author are briefly indicated by the title-page. He has dedicated his work to the Presbyterian, Congregational, Reformed Dutch, German Lutheran, Methodist, and Baptist denominations, and declares in his preface that the aim of the work is catholic and not sectarian.

The subject embraced in this treatise, describes the great battle-field on which are to meet the friends and the opposers of evangelical piety All mankind must have a religion. Enlightened nations cannot tolerate idolatry, it is too absurd. It matters little what the form is, if it have not the elements of evangelical piety. The gospel plan is simple. It is sustained and carried forward by the power of the Holy Ghost. If you set aside this plan, you must have pomp and ceremony, and the natural tendency is to a priesthood.

The work of Mr. Smyth is elaborate. He seems to have surveyed the whole ground, and has been at great expense in collecting and digesting whatever has been written upon the subject. With the peculiar views of the author on the subject of Presbyterianism as opposed to Congregationalism, we have no sympathy, but in the main question we concur with him.

The work is divided into three books, &c.

From the Presbyterian (Pittsburgh) Advocate.

We have also received by the kindness of the author, Rev. Thomas Smyth, of Charleston, S. C., his recent elaborate work, entitled—"Presbytery and not Prelacy the Scriptural and Primitive Polity" of the Christian Church. This book consists of twenty-four chapters, and is a learned and elaborate discussion of

the important topics brought under review in the controversy on Church Government with Papists and Prelatists. The design of the writer, as he informs us, was to condense the substance of the innumerable treatises which have been written on the subject, and to arrange their various topics in a more complete and comprehensive order, so as to present them in as perfect, clear, and satisfactory a manner as the limits of a single volume would permit. That Mr. Smyth has succeeded in his design, is testified by many competent witnesses, such as the Biblical Repertory, and others of the same high standing. After years of laborious research and comparison of the views of a large number of the ablest writers upon the subject, he has given us the result in this handsome octavo of 560 pages. It is very neatly got up, and printed upon fine paper; and in connection with an equally elaborate and applauded work, on the Apostolical Succession, and a third on Ecclesiastical Republicanism, all issued within a few years, forms a very creditable testimony to the genius and industry of the author. These works may be had at Carter's, Market-street.

By a private note from the same author, we are gratified to learn that the third edition of his "Ecclesiastical Catechism," will be immediately issued from the press. This manual of instruction, designed to explain in familiar question and answer, the Presbyterian form of Church Government, has also received high commendation from various most respectable sources.

From the North American.

PRESBYTERY AND NOT PRELACY the Scriptural and Primitive Polity, proved from the testimony of Scripture, the Fathers, the Schoolmen, the Reformers, and the English and Oriental Churches. Also, the Antiquity of Presbytery, including an account of the ancient Culdees and of St. Patrick. By Thomas Smyth, author of Lectures on the Apostolic Succession, &c.

This is an octavo volume, beautifully printed, and containing 600 pages. It is for sale by W. S. Martien, S. E. corner of Seventh and George streets. As the work of a most able and learned writer, it will doubtless be extensively read among all classes of Protestants whose faith and discipline are adverse to Episcopal government. More than this it is not the part of our press to say.

From the N. Y. Journal of Commerce.

SMYTH ON PRESBYTERY AND PRELACY.—The title-page of this elaborate work indicates the object and design of the author. It is as follows:—

Presbytery and not Prelacy the Scriptural and Primitive Polity, proved from the testimonies of Scripture, the Fathers, the Schoolmen, the Reformers, and the English and Oriental Churches. Also, the Antiquity of Presbytery, including an account of the Ancient Culdees, and of St. Patrick. By Thomas Smyth, author of Lectures on the Apostolical Succession, &c.

The author declares the aim of the work to be catholic, and not sectarian. He has dedicated it to the Presbyterian, Congregational, Reformed Dutch, German Lutheran, Methodist, and Baptist denominations, whose common principles of ecclesiastical order, in contrast with those of Prelacy and Popery, it is mainly designed to advocate.

Here, in the compass of an octavo volume of 540 pages, Mr. Smyth has condensed the substance of all that is valuable in the innumerable treatises that have been published on this great controversy. In the collection of these works in London and on the Continent of Europe, great expense was incurred; and in perusing, collating, and digesting them, the labor of years has been applied. The lucid arrangement adopted by the author tends much to enhance the interest of the various topics so ably and satisfactorily discussed. The work is divided into three Books, each of which is subdivided into several chapters. Book I. is designed to show that Presbytery, (under which term the author includes those generic principles common to all the non-Episcopal Christian denominations,) is the Scriptural and Apostolic order of the Church of Christ. In Book II. the claims of Presbytery to the true Apostolic or ministerial succession are sustained by an appeal to the Fathers, the Schoolmen, the Reformers, and to the Romish, Anglican, and other Churches. Book III. treats of the antiquity of Presbytery; and describes the Presbyterianism of the ancient Culdees of Ireland and Scotland, and also of St. Patrick.

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Smyth on Ecclesiastical Republicanism.—The necessity of compressing the preceding work within the briefest compass, compelled the author to leave out certain chapters originally designed to be embodied in it. Part of these related to the republicanism, liberality, and catholicity of Presbytery, in contrast with Prelacy and Popery. These have been published in a duodecimo volume of 300 pages and upwards, bearing the title prefixed to this paragraph. The author successfully exposes the futility of the arguments commonly advanced in favor of the claim preferred by the Prelatic and Romish Churches, to an exclusive catholicity, and to a greater liberality than other denominations. In contrasting the different ecclesiastical systems, he shows triumphantly the superior adaptation of Presbytery to the system of our republican

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government—its greater conformity, in spirit and in order, to our institutions.

From the Presbyterian.

Not long since we had the pleasure of commending to the notice of our readers an octavo volume on the Apostolical Succession, from the author whose fertile pen has now produced the two above named works. As our readers may perceive, these volumes bear upon the same great subject, and are the results of much study, and very extensive reading. * * * * As in his "Apostolical Succession," so in these volumes, Mr. Smyth has investigated his subject thoroughly, and constructed a full and conclusive argument in favor of Presbyterianism. In the former work, the claims of Presbytery as the true Apostolical order of the Church of Christ, are sustained in an argument of much force and great variety.

The second work, on "Ecclesiastical Republicanism," is one peculiarly suited to the times. The author very successfully proves that Presbytery is republican in its doctrinal and ecclesiastical systems. He investigates its structure, and from every part of it deduces this character of it, and not only so, but proves that in comparison with other forms of Church polity, it is pre-eminently so. It indeed constitutes the best defence of Presbyterianism against the current slanders of the day, with which we have met, and while we hope the former work will find an hon orable place in the library at least of every Presbyterian clergyman, this we should hope will be found in every Presbyterian family as well adapted to popular reading. Hoping that these books will be reviewed in our Monthlies and Quarterlies, we conclude our short notice of them with thanks to the author for his indefatigable labor in these particular departments, to which the controversies of the day have given unusual prominence. Prelacy with its arrogant pretensions will and must be defeated by the re sistance which it is now arousing.

From the Charleston Courier.

Two very able polemic works, the one entitled "Presbytery and not Prelacy the Scriptural and Primitive Polity," and the other, "Ecclesiastical Republicanism," from the pen of the Rev. Thomas Smyth, have been received and are for sale at the different bookstores in this city. The author in the composition of these works has shown himself an able controversialist, reasoning with clearness and cogency, and exhibiting great learning and

research. These volumes certainly place him high as a writer, and entitle him to rank among the foremost as a champion of his Church. Our neutrality on matters of religious controversy precludes us from an examination of the subjects discussed; and we therefore simply refer our readers to the following notices of these works, in other papers, to show the estimation in which they are held.

From a Writer in the Charleston Courier.

The Rev. Mr. Smyth's promised Treatise on Presbytery and Prelacy, has at last appeared, and will be found to sustain, in every way, his high reputation as a polemic and a controversial writer. In fact, he has proved himself absolute master of his subject, and fully competent to its discussion throughout the minutest details.

In the present work he assumes, however, a new position, and deserting his former posture of defence, assails his opponents with singular vigor and dexterity. There are, of course, two sides to every question; but he has fortified his views with such abundance of quotation from authority, such fertility of illustration, and such ingenuity of reasoning, that we shall wait with some impatience of curiosity to see what grounds of reply have been left to his antagonists.

Whatever else may result from these disputes, one thing is certain; that no theological library can be considered as properly furnished, in regard to this topic, which shall not contain these well-written and highly interesting volumes.

From the Rambler, by John B. Irving, M. D. (Charleston, S. C.)

Smyth's works on Presbytery and Prelacy and Ecclesiastical Republicanism, from the press of Crocker & Brewster, Boston, are before us.

The rule we have laid down for ourself in the conduct of the Rambler, forbids our entering into the discussion of any subject connected either with politics or religion; but we are bound in *justice to Southern Literature*, to notice in the most favorable manner the works before us, evidencing as they do the research and fine literary attainments of the author. These publications, like many others, should be attentively read by all seeking the truth—"either to make or break a faith." For our own part we are free to confess that *we have no prejudices*, and cheerfully read any work put into our hands on doctrinal points, happy to be set right whenever it is satisfactorily proved to us, that we have been

in error. Of all prejudices on earth, the most fatal to the spread of truth, to peace and good will among men, is religious prejudice!

From the Southern Christian Advocate.

This elaborate Treatise, from the pen of our accomplished fellow-townsman, the Rev. Mr. Smyth, is dedicated to the Presbyterian, Congregational, Reformed Dutch, German Lutheran, Methodist, and Baptist denominations, whose common principles of ecclesiastical order, in contrast with those of Prelacy and Papacy, it is mainly designed to advocate. The work is divided into three Books: the first, showing that Presbytery is the Scriptural and Apostolical order of the Church of Christ: the second, exhibiting the claims of Presbytery to the true Apostolical or Ministerial Succession, by an appeal to the Fathers, the Schoolmen, the Reformers, and to the Romish, Anglican, and other Churches: the third, presenting the antiquity of Presbytery, with a detailed historic account of the ancient Culdees of Ireland and Scotland. The whole forms a contribution to sacred letters, for which the country in general, the South in particular, is laid under special obligations to the author. The subject discussed, important at any time, is vitally so at the present day. Upon it hinges a ten years' controversy, in which an unprecedented amount of learning and vigor has been expended, and around which, all that is vital in Christianity, and hopeful for the redeemed race of mankind, is gathered.

Although we may not go the whole way with the author, in the minuter details of his subject, we agree with him in the leading principles he advocates, and thank him for the noble vindication which this publication, in connection with his work on Apostolical Succession, asserts against the growing intolerance of the times.

The work is beautifully printed, and for sale at the Methodist Southern Book-room, 240 King-street.

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Ecclesiastical Republicanism.—A Treatise under this title has recently been given to the world by the Rev. Dr. Smyth, of this city, who is advantageously known to the Christian public as the author of several valuable works on subjects of vital importance at the present time to Protestant Christendom. We have carefully read this publication, and do not hesitate to say that, in our opinion, it is one of the author's best productions, both as to force of reasoning and finish of style.

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It is but due to Dr. Smyth to add, and we take pleasure in doing so, that we except his publications entirely from the foregoing cen

sure. His notice of the Methodist E. Church in his work on Ecclesiastical Republicanism, is frank and kind; and although he has not presented the peculiarities of its organization in the point of light which we think sheer justice demands, yet he has not descended from the port of the catholic Christian, the accomplished scholar, the finished gentleman, to misrepresent and injure.

From the Charleston Observer.

It is about two years since the Rev. Mr. Smyth, of this city, issued a large volume, entitled "The Prelatical Doctrine of the Apostolical Succession examined, and the Protestant Ministry defended against the assumptions of Popery and High Churchism"—and this is now followed by an 8vo volume of nearly 600 pages. The larger part of the work is devoted to the proof that Presbytery is the Scriptural and Apostolical order of the Church. Then the claims of Presbytery to the true Apostolic Succession are sustained by an appeal to the Fathers, the Schoolmen, the Reformers, and to the Romish, Anglican, and other Churches—and the work concludes with proofs of the antiquity of Presbytery; with an exhibition of the Presbyterianism of the ancient Culdees of Ireland and Scotland, and also of St. Patrick. In defining his position, Mr. Smyth maintains that Presbyters are the only Bishops recognized in the word of God—that they are empowered to discharge all the offices and functions of the Christian ministry—that they succeed to all that authority, and to all those duties which have been devolved, by the Apostles, upon their successors in the ordinary and permanent ministry of the Gospel, and that there is no other order of Ministers distinct from and superior to them, to whom is given the exclusive possession of all ecclesiastical authority. He then openly denies the truth of the position, as maintained by Prelatists—that there are three original and distinct orders in the ministry—Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons—each instituted by Divine right through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and each of them essential to the valid constitution of a Church of Christ. His work is, therefore, both didactic and polemic. He shows both what is, and what is not, the Primitive, Scriptural, and Apostolical order of the Church. Besides frequent brief appeals to the Scriptures, he has brought about fifty passages in particular illustration of the positions which he has assumed; and his references are numerous to the most eminent writers on the subject, both ancient and modern. From the rich sources of information in the possession of the author, he could have compiled a work of great service to the truth and to the Church; but he has done much more. He has furnished as original a production as the nature of the subject would admit—

admirably arranged—and if there be any fault, it is in the superabundance of the proof brought to sustain positions which cannot be successfully controverted. So that if any should undertake to answer it, they will pass lightly over the main argument, and seize upon some of the appendages to which even the author has attached very little value. It is possible that Prelatists may pass this work by, under the assumption that their claims are beyond the reach of any such appeal. But whether they notice it or not, it will commend itself to the judgment and conscience of every intelligent and impartial reader. There is, moreover, very little, if any thing, which may properly be called sectarian, in the work All but Prelatists may read and enjoy it, and we feel no hesitancy in recommending it, especially to those who are set for the defence of the Gospel. This, together with the work on the Apostolic Succession, forms two of the best TRACTS FOR THE TIMES with which we are acquainted.

From the (N. Y.) Baptist Advocate.

An octavo, of nearly 600 pages, handsomely printed on clear paper, and neatly bound. It is designed, not to exhibit and enforce all the doctrines and views of Presbyterianism, but merely to prove, from Scripture, history, and reason, that instead of three orders in the ministry, as Churchmen claim, there was instituted by the Apostles, and has continued throughout a great part of the Church till the present day, but one order, that of Presbyters or Elders, holding one, and a uniformly equal office. To sustain this view, the author has collected a mass of testimony and evidence from ecclesiastical writers, which evinces a degree of research not often expended in our day in preparing a volume for the press. The prelatical assumptions of Puseyism are wrested from them by the force of weapons taken from the hands of illustrious Churchmen, and little is left to cover their mortified defeat, but their own imperturbable effrontery.

The author does not fail of argument, but the chief merit of the work consists in its abundant and appropriate extracts, quotations, and citations from authors not accessible to many readers. Care is taken, we believe, in every instance, to give in a note the book and page referred to in the body of the work.

From the Southern Baptist Advocate.

That these are able, learned, and, on the whole, candid works, it needs not our suffrages to testify. Mr. Smyth, in a commendable spirit of charity, would construe the word Presbytery as em

bracing the Eldership of all non-prelatical Churches. Let him speak for himself on this important point. * * * * * * This first work will materially aid the young student of ecclesiastical government in arriving at that understanding, and as such, we cordially recommend it to his attention. We wish we could copy the whole of Mr Smyth's "Contents," but this our limits do not permit. Those of the first three chapters of Book I., and those of Book III., will give a fair idea of the whole.

From the Southern Chronicle.

We have received of the Reverend Author, "Presbytery and not Prelacy the Scriptural and Primitive Polity, proved from the testimonies of Scripture, the Fathers, the Schoolmen, the Reformers, and the English and Oriental Churches." Also, "Ecclesiastical Republicanism; or the Republicanism, Liberality, and Catholicity of Presbytery in contrast with Prelacy and Popery;" both by the Rev. Thomas Smyth, D. D., of Charleston.

The author is already favorably known to the religious public through his "Lectures on Apostolical Succession," and other works; and although we have not had time to form any opinion of the merits of the works before us, we have no doubt, from his established reputation, and character for piety and learning, they will be an acquisition to the theologian and patriot.

From the South Carolinian.

In this work, as we gather from its preface, etc., not having had leisure to read it, the design of the author has been to condense the substance of all that is valuable from the various treatises which have been written on this great controversy, in England and on the Continent of Europe. And, to arrange the various topics in a complete and comprehensive order, the work is divided into three Books, each of which is subdivided into several chapters.

The Rev. Author of these works is an able and accomplished scholar, whose writings are too well known and too highly appreciated by the Christian community, to require any encomium or approbation from us; and those before us have elicited the highest testimonials of approval and regard from many of the ablest religious papers and most eminent divines in the country; from among which, we select the following, by the Rev. Dr. Miller, than whom few, if any, can have higher or more deserved influence with those who concur with him in religious doctrines:

"We return our sincere thanks to the respected and gifted author, for the volumes before us, whose high character cannot fail

to command from us, as from others, an early and attentive perusal.

From the Protestant and Herald.

PRESBYTERY AND NOT PRELACY THE SCRIPTURAL AND PRIMITIVE POLITY: also, THE ANTIQUITY OF PRESBYTERY, including an account of the Ancient Culdees, and of St. Patrick. pp. 568.

ECCLESIASTICAL REPUBLICANISM, or the Republicanism, Liberality, and Catholicity of Presbytery, in contrast with Prelacy and Popery, by Rev. Thomas Smyth, D. D., Charleston, S. C. pp. 323.

We are under obligations to the learned author for copies of the above works, which were sent to us some time since, and have not been noticed heretofore, because, on account of absence from home, we have not had time to peruse them. They have been for some months before the public, and have called forth the almost entire approbation of the whole anti-Prelatical Christian community. The subject of Church Government seems to be undergoing a thorough revision, by almost the entire Christian world at the present time, in consequence of the arrogant claims of Prelatists to the Episcopal being the only true Church. This controversy has not hitherto agitated the Western Churches to any considerable extent, from the fact that the Episcopal Church is quite small as to numbers and influence amongst us; still it will, sooner or later, reach us, and we shall be compelled to meet it in some shape. We know of no better method of preparing for it, than to purchase and study these volumes. The author exhibits great industry and research, and being the possessor of one of the best private libraries in our country, he has had access to almost every work that has ever been written upon these subjects He possesses a strong mind and rather lively imagination, which give to his style a vivacity which makes those portions of these works, which are comparatively uninteresting, quite readable.— He draws his arguments from Scripture, the Fathers, the Schoolmen, the Reformers, and the English and Oriental Churches. He shows that the Presbyterian form of government not only has the sanction of Scripture and antiquity, but that it is pre-eminently favorable to civil and religious liberty. The author has laid the Presbyterian Church under deep and lasting obligation, for this able defence of her government and order. Her ministers and elders will be unfaithful to their trust, should they fail to avail themselves of these facilities for defending her from the attacks of her enemies, when placed within their reach. The paper, type, and binding, are all very good. The works are for sale in Cincinnati. We have marked several extracts for our paper.

JOHN F. TROW & COMPANY'S

Book and Job

PRINTING OFFICE,

33 AND 33½ ANN-STREET.

The Proprietors of this Establishment have completed their arrangements to execute

BOOK AND JOB PRINTING

in the most expeditious and handsome manner.

The foregoing cut gives a correct view of their premises, a description of which may not be out of place here.

There is extended through the whole front under the street, a large and substantial VAULT for stereotype plates, where the plates of our patrons are deposited without charge, and where they are beyond the risk of fire.

In the basement of No. 33 are the Engine and Boiler, and a Double Cylinder Power Press.

The whole power requisite to drive a large number of power presses, and sufficient heat to warm all the apartments above, are obtained from this engine and boiler. The manner of obtaining the heat, and distributing it, is somewhat peculiar. A large oblong chest, made of copper and filled with copper tubes, receives the exhaust steam, which creates great heat in this chest; connected with this is a blower driven by steam, by which the air is blown through the heated copper pipes into all the rooms above.

There are many advantages in this mode of heating; it prevents the dirt and risk from fires arising from the use of stoves, and gives a very pleasant and healthful atmosphere. The Cylinder Press in this room, upon which the "American Republican" is printed, is capable of printing off about 4000 per hour.

THE FIRST STORY, or Store part of the building, is occupied as a Counting-room and Storage-room for paper.

THE SECOND STORIES are used for pressing printed sheets, and for Bookbinding.

THE THIRD STORIES are used for the Press Rooms. In these rooms are six Adams's Improved, two Hoe's Cylinder Power Presses, and three Hand Presses. The power presses are acknowledged to be the most superior for Book printing of any ever invented. They are calculated for every description of letter-press printing. The finest wood engravings are printed on them in a manner not inferior to the most careful hand press work.

THE FOURTH STORIES are used for Composition Rooms. In these there are four divisions, entirely distinct from each other.

FIRST DIVISION, is for BOOK WORK in the English Language.

SECOND DIVISION, is for BOOK WORK in the Oriental and Classical Languages.

THIRD DIVISION, is for the composition of the American Republican.

FOURTH DIVISION, is for the composition of Job work of every variety.

THE FIFTH STORIES are used for proof-reading, and a drying room, The principal portion of the paper-drying is done in this part of the establishment. The heat is conveyed to this room in the manner already described; and is admirably calculated for the purpose. The heat is great, and being conducted into this part of the building through tin pipes, enables us to dry in ALL WEATHER without inconvenience to any person engaged in the building.

From this description it will be seen that our office is arranged upon a plan of convenience, safety, and system, well adapted to the accommodation of publishers and authors. Our fonts of type, from Agate to Pica, are new and very large, enabling us, with our other means, to print works of every description, both Letter-Press and Stereotype, from the smallest Job to the largest Volume, with the utmost accuracy and despatch.

To the CLASSICAL AND ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT of our business we invite particular attention. We have in our employment experienced and accurate Compositors, regularly trained to this branch of the business; and a gentleman of education and experience as Proof-Reader, for this Department especially.

Our Type, of which specimens are given on the pages following, is of a very beautiful cut, from the celebrated Foundery of TAUCHNITZ, of Leipzig. The fonts are in perfect order, and of sufficient size to enable us to execute any required work.

As specimens of the accuracy and beauty of the Greek and Oriental Works printed by us, we refer, among others, to the following:

GESENIUS' HEBREW LEXICON. Translated by Edward Robinson, D.D. Published by Crocker & Brewster, Boston.—NOVUM TESTAMENTUM GRAECE. Edited by Edward Robinson, D.D. Published by Leavitt, Trow & Co.—NORDHEIMER'S HEBREW GRAMMAR and CONCORDANCE. Published by Wiley & Putnam.—XENOPHON'S ANABASIS, and HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Edited by J. J. Owen, A.M. Published by Leavitt, Trow & Co.—CRUSIUS' HOMERIC LEXICON. Translated by Prof. H. Smith. Published by H. Huntington, Hartford.—BUSH'S HEBREW GRAMMAR, and other works.

Our business has the personal attention of ourselves—and we trust by unwearied application to receive from our patrons and the public in general a continuance of their patronage.

JOHN F. TROW & CO.

J. F. TROW,
JONATHAN LEAVITT.

Specimens of Greek and Oriental Type.

I.

PICA GREEK.

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν. Πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐ-

II.

SMALL PICA GREEK.

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν. Πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἕν, ὁ γέγονεν. Ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ

III.

LONG PRIMER GREEK

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τον θεόν. Πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἕν, ὁ γέγονεν. Ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ

IV.

BOURGEOIS GREEK.

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν. Πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἕν, ὃ γέγονεν. Ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν

V.

BREVIER GREEK

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν. Πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἕν, ὃ γέγονεν. Ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων· καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκο-

VI.

GREAT PRIMER HEBREW.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ׃
וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תֹהוּ וָבֹהוּ וְחֹשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ
אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם׃ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי

VII.

ENGLISH HEBREW.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ׃ וְהָאָרֶץ
הָיְתָה תֹהוּ וָבֹהוּ וְחֹשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת
עַל־פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם׃ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר וַיְהִי־אוֹר׃ וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים

VIII.

PICA HEBREW.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ׃ וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה
תֹהוּ וָבֹהוּ וְחֹשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי
הַמָּיִם׃ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר וַיְהִי־אוֹר׃ וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־

IX.

SMALL PICA HEBREW.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ׃ וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תֹהוּ וָבֹהוּ
וְחֹשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם׃ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים
יְהִי אוֹר וַיְהִי־אוֹר׃ וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאוֹר כִּי־טוֹב וַיַּבְדֵּל אֱלֹהִים בֵּין

X.

MINION HEBREW
(WITHOUT POINTS.)

בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ׃ והארץ היתה תהו ובהו וחשך על־פני
תהום ורוח אלהים מרחפת על־פני המים׃ ויאמר אלהים יהי אור ויהי־אור׃ וירא אלהים
את־האור כי־טוב ויבדל אלהים בין האור ובין החשך׃ ויקרא אלהים לאור יום ולחשך

XI.

LONG PRIMER HEBREW,

(WITHOUT POINTS.)

בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ: והארץ
היתה תהו ובהו וחשך על־פני תהום ורוח אלהים מרחפת
על־פני המים: ויאמר אלהים יהי אור ויהי־אור: וירא

XII.

BOURGEOIS HEBREW,

(WITHOUT POINTS.)

בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ: והארץ
היתה תהו ובהו וחשך על־פני תהום ורוח אלהים
מרחפת על־פני המים: ויאמר אלהים יהי אור ויהי־

XIII.

SMALL PICA RABBINIC.

בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ: והארץ היתה תהו ובהו וחשך על־פני תהום ורוח אלהים מרחפת על־פני המים: ויאמר אלהים יהי אור ויהי־אור: וירא אלהים את־האור כי־טוב ויבדל אלהים בין האור ובין החשך: ויקרא אלהים

XIV.

GREAT PRIMER SYRIAC.

ܒܪܫܝܬ ܒܪܐ ܐܠܗܝܡ ܐܬ ܫܡܝܐ ܘܐܬ ܐܪܥܐ: ܘܐܪܥܐ ܗܘܬ ܬܗܘ ܘܒܗܘ ܘܚܫܟ ܥܠ ܦܢܝ ܬܗܘܡ ܘܪܘܚ ܐܠܗܝܡ ܡܪܚܦܬ ܥܠ ܦܢܝ ܡܝܐ: ܘܐܡܪ ܐܠܗܝܡ ܢܗܘܐ ܢܘܪܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܢܘܪܐ: ܘܚܙܐ

XV.

ENGLISH SYRIAC.

ܒܪܫܝܬ ܒܪܐ ܐܠܗܝܡ ܐܬ ܫܡܝܐ ܘܐܬ ܐܪܥܐ: ܘܐܪܥܐ ܗܘܬ ܬܗܘ ܘܒܗܘ ܘܚܫܟ ܥܠ ܦܢܝ ܬܗܘܡ ܘܪܘܚ ܐܠܗܝܡ ܡܪܚܦܬ ܥܠ ܦܢܝ ܡܝܐ: ܘܐܡܪ ܐܠܗܝܡ ܢܗܘܐ ܢܘܪܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܢܘܪܐ.

XVI.

PICA ARABIC.

أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ
مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ ٱلْمَرْءِ وزَوْجِهِ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ
بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا

XVII.

SMALL PICA ARABIC.

أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ
مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ ٱلْمَرْءِ وزَوْجِهِ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ
بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا

XVIII.

PICA SAMARITAN.

ⲁⲃⲅⲇⲉⲍⲏⲑⲓⲕⲗⲙⲛⲝⲟⲡⲣⲥⲧⲩⲫⲭⲯⲱ
ⲁⲃⲅⲇⲉⲍⲏⲑⲓⲕⲗⲙⲛⲝⲟⲡⲣⲥⲧⲩⲫⲭⲯⲱ
ⲁⲃⲅⲇⲉⲍⲏⲑⲓⲕⲗⲙⲛⲝⲟⲡⲣⲥⲧⲩⲫⲭⲯⲱ

XIX.

PICA ETHIOPIC.

ወተኳዘ: ዮናስ: ሀበዖ: ት: ካዘ: ወሐዘሪ:: ወጸለዖ:
ፃበ: እግዚአብ: ሔር: ወይቤ: እግዚኦ: አኮ ሪ: ኳመዝ:
እቤ: በብሔ: ርዖ: ወበእፃተ: ዝሪቱ: ተፃ: ጣእኵ: ተርሴስ:
እስመ: አአምር: ኳመ: መሐረ: እ: ሪተ: ወመስተሠሀለ:

XX.

ENGLISH COPTIC.

Þeꙩ ⲧⲁⲣⲭⲏ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲥⲁⲥⲓ ⲡⲉ ⲟⲩⲟⲉ ⲡⲓⲥⲁⲥⲓ
ⲗⲁⲫⲭⲏ Ⳑⲁⲧⲉⲙ ⲫⲧ ⲟⲩⲟⲉ ⲗⲉ ⲟⲩⲙⲟⲩⲧ ⲗⲉ
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